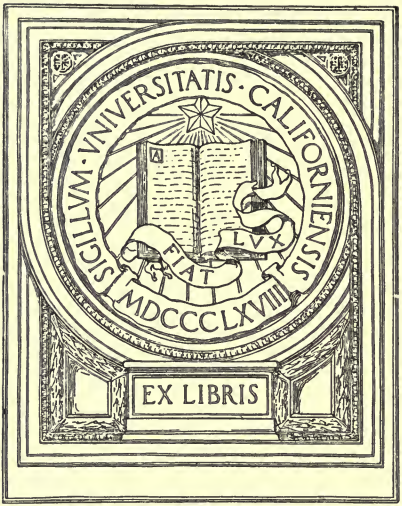
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CHRISTMAS CAROLS,

ANCIENT AND MODERN;

INCLUDING

THE MOST POPULAR IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND,

AND THE AIRS TO WHICH THEY ARE SUNG.

ALSO SPECIMENS OF

French Provincial Carols.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES.

BY

WILLIAM SANDYS, F.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION.

The study of Popular Antiquities, as connected with the early history of mankind, is one of deep interest, involving researches into the different ancient systems of religion, and is a subject of too serious a nature to be enlarged on in the following pages. The sacred rites and ceremonies of the various Heathen nations, however different the details may appear, had a common origin. For some few years after the Flood, mankind had one religion; the worship of the true God. But so prone is man to err, when unassisted by the Divine grace, that a century had scarcely elapsed before a perverted system was introduced, and the Tower of Babel was built, which caused the dispersion of nations. As the respective migrations receded from the common centre, which was the seat of true religion, so did the forms of worship adopted by them get gradually more corrupted; and in lapse of time, the allegories and symbols with which their ceremonies were burthened, confused all authentic traditions of their origin, unless, as has been supposed, they were preserved to a certain extent by some of the chief and chosen of the priesthood. Traces of such origin might, however, be found in every quarter of the world, however disguised; as, in the allusions to the deluge; the fall of man, his punishment, his forgiveness, and existence in a future state; vicarious sacrifice, debased into the immolation of human victims, and many others.

The various customs to commemorate the return of the seasons, appear also to have been similar to a great extent throughout the world, though to these would occasionally be superadded festivals arising from local circumstances. These commemorations were held as religious festivals, and so deep rooted had become the attachment of the Heathens to them, that some of the early Christians, instead of endeavouring to abolish, made them subservient to Christianity, first modifying and cleansing them from their grosser ceremonies, a practice, however, reprobated by the Apostles. Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neocæsarea, who died in 265, instituted annual festivals to the saints and martyrs, which succeeded those of the Heathens, in order to facilitate their conversion; and the keeping of Christmas with joy and feasting, playing and sports, replaced the *Bacchanalia* and *Saturnalia*. Papal Rome preserved many relics of Heathen Rome; and ancient statues were preserved as objects of adoration, being changed but in name. Pagan temples also were converted into Christian churches. When Pope Gregory sent St. Austin over in the end of the sixth century to convert the Anglo-Saxons, he directed him to accommodate the ceremonies of the Christian worship, as much as possible, to those of the Heathen, that the people might not be much startled at the change; and, in particular, he advised him to allow the Christian converts, on certain festivals, to kill and eat a great number of oxen to the glory of God, as they had formerly done to the honour of the devil.* In after times the clergy endeavoured to connect the remnants of Pagan idolatry with Christianity, in consequence of the difficulty they found in sup-

* Henry's History of England, 8vo. vol. iii. p. 194.

pressing them. On the introduction of the Protestant religion, some Catholic observances were in like manner connived at, in order to humour the uneducated part of the community, and the festivals handed down, though with various alterations, from our Pagan ancestors, were preserved. Thus we may account for the superstitious customs that still attend the observance of many of our popular feasts and holidays, and that may be traced in some of our games and amusements, and indeed in several of the common occurrences of life.

Among the most celebrated of the festivals of the ancients was that in honour of the return of the sun, which at the winter solstice begins gradually to regain power, and to ascend apparently in the horizon. Previously to this the year was drawing to a close, and the world was typically considered to be in the same state. The promised restoration of light and commencement of a new æra were therefore hailed with rejoicings and thanksgivings.

The Saxon and other northern nations kept a festival at this time of the year in honour of Thor, in which they mingled feasting, drinking, and dancing, with sacrifices and religious rites. It was called Yule, or Jule, a term of which the derivation has caused dispute amongst antiquaries; some considering it to mean a festival, and others stating that Iol, or Iul, (spelt in various ways,) is a primitive word, conveying the idea of Revolution or Wheel, and applicable therefore to the return of the sun. Persons anxious to indulge in verbal disquisitions may find much learned information on the subject in the voluminous works of Gebelin, Hickes, Junius, &c. The name Yule still continues to be applied to the Christian festival in Scotland, and in parts of England; having been retained when Paganism gave place to Christianity.

The Saturnalia of the Romans had apparently the same object as the Yule-tide, or feast of the Northern nations, and were probably adopted from some more ancient nations, as the Greeks, Mexicans, Persians, Chinese, &c. had all something similar. In the course of them, as is well known, masters and slaves were supposed to be on an equality; indeed, the former waited on the latter. Presents were mutually given and received, as Christmas presents in these days. Towards the end of the feast, when the sun was on its return, and the world was considered to be renovated, a king or ruler was chosen, with considerable powers granted to him during his ephemeral reign, whence may have sprung some of the Twelfth Night revels, mingled with those in honour of the Manifestation and Adoration of the Magi. Our sacred feast of Christmas happens at the same time of the year as the Yule of the Northern nations, and the other feasts before alluded to, and has preserved vestiges of some of their observances: as decking with greens, the use of misletoe, and, perhaps, even the wassail bowl.

According to Brady,* the Christian epocha was first introduced into chronology in the year 523, and was established in this country by Bede; but the observance of the feast in honour of the Nativity was of much earlier date. It is not certain whether it was kept by the Apostles, although by no means improbable. Clement, who flourished in the first century, says, "Brethren, keep diligently feast-daies, and truly in the first place the day of Christ's birth."† In the second century it was ordained, according to

* Clavis Calendaria, vol. ii. p. 315.

† The Feast of Feasts, Oxford, 1644, whence also many of the particulars respecting the celebration during the first five centuries are taken.

Telesphorus, in his Decretall Epistle, "that in the holy night of the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, they do celebrate publique Church services, and in them solemnly sing the Angells Hymne, because also the same night he was declared unto the shepherds by an Angell, as the truth itself doth witnesse." In the same age Theophilus, bishop of Cæsarea, recommends the celebration of the birth-day of our Lord, on what day soever the 25th of December shall happen. In the following century Cyprian begins his Treatise on the Nativity thus: "The much wished-for and long-expected Nativity of Christ is come, the famous solemnity is come." Gregory Nazianzen, who died in 389, and other Christian writers of the same age, mention the feast, and in particular he cautions against feasting to excess, dancing, and crowning the doors (practices derived from the Heathens); urging the celebration after an heavenly, and not an earthly manner. From this caution it would seem as if the religious part of the festival, as in the present times, was not sufficiently attended to, and that the spiritual thanksgiving was in danger of being absorbed in the temporal rejoicing. Gregory's observation, however, might have been intended as much for a warning as a rebuke, because in the same age there is on record, connected with the religious celebration of this day, one of those acts of ferocity of which the annals of human nature unfortunately afford too many examples. A multitude of Christians of all ages had assembled to commemorate the Nativity in the temple at Nicomedia, in Bithynia, when Dioclesian the tyrant had it enclosed and set on fire, and about 20,000 persons perished on the occasion.*

* The Feast of Feasts, p. 13.

After the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, Christmas was observed as a solemn festival, and the ordinary meetings of the Witten-agemots were then held, as well as at Easter and Whitsuntide, wherever the court happened to be. At these times the Anglo-Saxon kings, and afterwards the Danish kings of England, lived in great state, wore their crowns, and were surrounded by all the great men of their kingdoms (with strangers of rank), who were sumptuously entertained, and the most important affairs of church and state were brought under consideration.

In these, as in more polished ages, the love of dancing appears to have been extended to a fault, for William of Malmsbury relates a story of fifteen young women and eighteen young men dancing and singing (A.D. 1012) in the church-yard of a church dedicated to St. Magnus on the day before Christmas, and thereby disturbing one Robert a priest, who was performing mass in the church. In consequence of his prayers to that effect, they continued to dance and sing for a whole year without intermission, feeling neither heat, cold, hunger, thirst, weariness, or wear of apparel, and wore away the earth till they were sunk up to the middle.*

The Anglo-Norman kings celebrated these festivals with increased splendour, when all the prelates and nobles of the kingdom were, by their tenures, obliged to attend their sovereign to assist in the administration of justice, and in deliberating on the great affairs of the kingdom. On these occasions the king wore his crown, and feasted his nobles in the great hall of his palace, and made them pre-

* Henry's History of England, vol. iv. 327—9.

sents of robes, &c. as marks of his royal favour; after which they proceeded to business.*

Polydore Virgil says,† that it was the custom of the English, as early as the reign of Henry the Second (about 1170) to celebrate their Christmas with plays, masques, and magnificent spectacles, together with games at dice and dancing; he derives many of the particulars from the Roman Saturnalia, and considers the Christmas Prince, or Lord of Misrule, a personage almost peculiar to this country. From this time mummeries‡ and disguisings, with plays and pageants, appear to have been introduced among the diversions of the king and nobles at Christmas; but they were probably in vogue among the inferior orders at an earlier period, though of a description rude as their habits and poor as their means. They are supposed to have been derived from the custom of the Heathens during some of their festivals, on the Kalends of January, to go about in disguises as wild beasts and cattle, and the sexes also exchanging apparel: a practice productive of many abuses, and much opposed by the clergy, when they found many of the early Chris-

* Henry's History of England, vol. vi. p. 13. In some of the romances of the age may also be found references to this custom, as, for example, in Richard Coer de Lion, (written prior to 1300,) line 1773 & seq.

Christmas is a time full honest;
Kyng Richard it honoured with gret feste.
All his clerks and barouns
Were set in their pavylouns,
And served with grete plenté
Of mete and drink and each dainté.

Weber's Metrical Romances, vol. ii. p. 70.

† Hist. Angl. lib. 13.

‡ The word *mumm* is said to be derived from the Danish; to disguise with a mask.

tians endeavoured to intermingle it with their own observances during the Christmas holidays, although the more devout celebrated the Nativity by prayer, thanksgiving, and psalm-singing.

In the council, generally called Concilium Africanum, held A.D. 408, "Stage-playes and spectacles are forbidden on the Lord's-day, and other solemne Christian festivalls." Theodosius the younger, in his laws *de Spectaculis*, in 425, forbade shows or games on the Nativity, and some other feasts. In the council of Auxerre in Burgundy, in 578, disguisings are again forbidden; but these canons were not duly attended to, for at another council in 614 it was found necessary to repeat them in stronger terms, declaring it to be unlawful to make any filthy plays upon the Kalends of January.

The ecclesiastics are said to have introduced miracle-plays and scripture histories about the end of the eleventh century, and they were become common in the time of Henry the Second. The secular plays, which they were intended to replace, were of a comic nature, with coarse jests introduced, accompanied by music, dancing, mimicry, &c. and principally performed by strolling minstrels. The clergy, now adding instruction to amusement, found the representation of their plays very effective in withdrawing the populace from the licentiousness of the secular performances, and consequently endeavoured to render the construction of them more interesting and the machinery more imposing. They were at first of a very homely nature, and in many instances the effect is ludicrous to our modernized taste. Thus, in the Chester Mysteries,* Noah's wife refuses to go into the ark without

* Produced in 1268, according to Collier's History of Dramatic Poetry, a work that contains much valuable information.

her "gossepes everich one," and swears by "Saint John" and "Christ;" when she is at last forced in by her sons, she salutes Noah, on his welcoming her, with a hearty box on the ear. In the Cornish mystery of the Creation of the World, by Jordan, published by Mr. Davies Gilbert, the lady is rather more courteous, as she says on being hastened—

> 'Tis fit to save what is,
> I must not cast it away,
> They cost store of money
> The things y^{t} we here,
> Dear Noah, you know.

It is however not unlikely that some comic passages were purposely inserted, in order to relieve the tediousness of the performances, which sometimes lasted for days. Dr. Dibdin mentions one called "*La Vēgeance et destruction de Hierusalem*," acted in 1437, which occupied four days in the performance, and required one hundred and seventy-eight actors.*

The pilgrims and crusaders, on their return from the Holy Land, brought with them new subjects for theatrical representation, founded on the objects of their devotions and of their labours; and many allusions to these will be found in the early mysteries; as the introduction of Mahound for instance. The Christmas-play of St. George and the Dragon, still preserved in the western and northern parts of the kingdom, with the King of Egypt, and fair Sabra his daughter, now generally enacted by a "great lubberly boy," may also derive its origin from this period.

Certain religious fraternities and schools at different times claimed an exclusive privilege of performing these plays or mysteries; the parish clerks

* Library Companion, p. 777. n.

in particular were famed for their representations. In the year 1378 the scholars of St. Paul's School presented a petition to Richard the Second, praying him "to prohibit some unexpert people from presenting the History of the Old Testament, to the great prejudice of the said clergy, who have been at great expense in order to represent it publickly at Christmas." Different guilds, or trades, also had their respective pageants, of which several instances are mentioned in Brand's History of Newcastle; the Chester and Coventry, and other similar sets of mysteries, were also performed by them.

Disguisings and pageants with these plays speedily became some of the principal diversions at court during Christmas, when any persons were admitted who were competent to add to the amusement of the guests.

In 1348, Edward the Third held his Christmas at Guildford, and there is an account in the wardrobe rolls of dresses, *ad faciendum Ludos domini regis ad festum natalis Domini celebratos apud Guldeford.* In 1391 (temp. Richard the Second) the sages of the law were made subjects for disguisements; as in the rolls of his wardrobe is this entry —"Pro xxi *coifs* de tela linea pro hominibus de lege contrafactis pro Ludo regis tempore natalis Domini anno xii." That is, for twenty-one linen coifs for counterfeiting men of the law in the king's play at Christmas.* Ten years after this, the Emperor of Constantinople, as he is called, being here, the king (Henry the Fourth) held his Christmas at Eltham,† and men of London made a "gret mummyng to him of xii Aldermen & here sones, for whiche they had gret thanke." The citizens were

* Warton's Hist. Poetry, 8vo. ii. 71—2.
† Collier's Hist. Dramatic Poetry, vol. i. 16.

in favour at this time, the king having two years previously escaped a dangerous conspiracy through the timely notice of the Lord Mayor.* The Earls of Huntingdon and Kent, (then recently degraded from the dukedoms of Exeter and Surrey,) together with the Earl of Salisbury and others, in order to effect the restoration of Richard the Second, and the recovery of their own titles and possessions, had proposed, under colour of a Christmas mumming, to gain access to Windsor Castle, and kill the king and princes. In such esteem was this feast held, that it even hushed the voice of war. During the siege of Orleans in 1428, " the solemnities and festivities of Christmas gave a short interval of repose. The English lords requested of the French commanders, that they might have a night of minstrelsy, with trumpets and clarions. This was granted, and the horrors of war were suspended by melodies, that were felt to be delightful."†

About the middle of the fifteenth century, Moralities were introduced, consisting of allegorical personifications; and these may also be included in the list of Christmas amusements. At this period, indeed, these public diversions were in general confined to certain great feasts, (of which Christmas was the principal,) when entertainments of all kinds were resorted to with avidity, to compensate for the previous want of them. A case somewhat parallel may be observed in the eagerness with which country people flock in to their central or market town, during fair-time. Nor is the character of the entertainments provided for them in

* Or rather of the Earl of Rutland (degraded from Duke of Albemarle), one of the conspirators.—*Hume's Hist. of England*, vol. iii. p. 63.

† Turner's Hist. England, 4to. vol. iii. pp. 34–5.

the present age, of a much higher class than those of the time now under notice. Jugglers, inferior in skill, if we may judge from old drawings, to those who amused our ancestors; learned animals; rope-dancers; itinerant singers; stage-plays, in the literal sense of the word; and on the Continent, scripture pieces are yet performed,* as they were in this country, (though perhaps in the shape of a puppet-show,) during the last Century.† Of Mr. Punch, I

* The origin of the drama in France, is by some referred to the mysteries performed by the Confreres de la Passion, about 1402; by some to the Troubadours; but in an old Chronicle in verse, speaking of the fête which Philippe-le-Bel gave in 1313, on conferring knighthood on his children, among other amusements during the four days of rejoicing, were exhibited the following spectacles: Adam et Eve; les Trois Rois; le meurtre des Innocens; N. S. riant avec sa Mere, et *mangeant des pommes;* Hérode et Caïphe *en mître;* Pilate lavant ses mains, &c. These were relieved by burlesque pantomimes and dances, amongst them the King of the Bean (un Roi de la fève). Some of the earliest pieces had reference to the Crusades —*Fabliaux ou Contes du* xiie *et du* xiiie *Siècle. Paris,* 1779, 4 vols. 8vo. vol. i. pp. 329–30, &c.

† In Harl. MS. 5931, being a collection of handbills, &c. during the time of Queen Anne, amongst others similar, are the following:—

"By her Majestie's Permission.
At HEATLY's Booth,

over against the *Cross-Daggers,* next to *Mr. Miller's Booth:* During the time of *Bartholomew-Fair,* will be presented a *little* Opera, call'd The old *Creation of the World,* Newly Reviv'd, With the Addition of the Glorious *Battle* obtained over the *French* and *Spaniards,* by his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough.*

The Contents are these.

1. The Creation of *Adam* and *Eve.*
2. The Intreagues of *Lucifer* in the Garden of *Eden.*
3. *Adam* and *Eve* driven out of Paradice.
4. *Cain* going to Plow, *Abel* driving Sheep.

beg to speak with due respect, whether he be the descendant of the Vice of the Moralities with his wooden lath, or not (though Harlequin may better answer this description); he still maintains his ground, and has been the cause of laughter to most of us; long and late therefore may it be before he is compelled by the "march of intellect" to squeak out his adieus, and favour us with his reminiscences.

During the destructive wars of York and Lan-

5. *Cain* killeth his Brother *Abel.*
6. *Abraham* offering his Son *Isaac.*
7. Three Wisemen of the *East* guided by a Star, who Worship him.
8. Joseph *and* Mary flee away by Night *upon* an Ass.
9. *King* Herod's cruelty, his Men's spears *laden* with *Children.*
10. Rich *Dives invites* his *Friends,* and orders his Porter to keep the Beggars from his Gate.
11. Poor *Lazarus* comes a begging at Rich *Dives's* Gate, the Dogs lick his Sores.
12. The good Angel and Death contends for *Lazarus's* Life.
13. Rich *Dives* is taken sick and dieth, he is buried in great solemnity.
14. Rich *Dives* in Hell, and *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Bosom, seen in a most glorious Object, all in machines, descending in a Throne, Guarded with multitudes of Angels, with the Breaking of the Clouds, discovering the Palace of the Sun, in double and treble Prospects, to the Admiration of all Spectators.

Likewise several Rich and Large Figures, which Dances *Jiggs, Sarabands, Anticks* and Country *Dances* between every Act; compleated with the merry Humors of Sir John Spendall and *Punchinello,* with several other things never yet Exposed.

Perform'd by Mat. Heatly.
VIVAT REGINA."

"At Crawly's *Booth, over against the* Crown Tavern *in* Smithfield, *during the time of* Bartholomew-Fair, *a little* Opera, *call'd* the Old Creation of the World, *yet Newly reviv'd, with the addition* of Noah's Flood," &c.

caster, the observances and festivities at Christmas time must have been liable to frequent interruption, but during the latter part of the reign of Edward the Fourth, and especially upon the establishment of Henry the Seventh, they were attended to with increasing zest. By the ordinances for governing the household of George Duke of Clarence in the 8th of Edward the Fourth, it appears that games at dice, cards, or any other hazard for money, were forbidden except during the twelve days at Christmas. In a book much esteemed at that time, and well-known at present to bibliomaniacs,* it is stated, "For to represente in playnge at Crystmasse herodes and the thre kynges and other processes of the gospelles both than and at Ester and other tymes also it is lefull and cōmendable." Leland, speaking of 1489, says, "This Cristmas I saw no disgysyngs, and but right few plays. But ther was an Abbot of Misrule, that made much sport and did right well his office." In the following year, however, "on neweres day at nyght, there was a goodly disgysyng," and "many and dyvers pleyes." The Household Book of Henry the Seventh, in the Chapter-house at Westminster, contains numerous disbursements connected with Christmas diversions, which prove them to have been much encouraged at Court during this reign. In his seventh year is a payment to Wat Alyn (Walter Alwyn) in full payment for the disguysing made at Christmas, £14. 13*s.* 4*d.* and payments for similar purposes occur in the following years, varying occasionally in amount. Another book, also in the Chapter-house, called "The Kyng's boke of paymentis," contains various payments to players and others who assisted to amuse the king at Christmas; and among the rest,

* Dives and Pauper, ed. W. de Worde, 1496.

to the Lord of Misrule (or Abbot as he is sometimes called), for several years, "in rewarde for his besynes in Crestenmes holydays, £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*"

The plays at this festival seem to have been acted by the "gentelmen of the King's Chapell," as there are several liberal payments to certain of them for playing on Twelfth Night: for instance, an entry on January 7th, 23 Henry VII. of a reward to five of them of £6. 13*s.* 4*d.* for acting before the King on the previous night; but he had a distinct set of players for acting interludes at other times.

In the reign of Henry the Eighth, masques, pageants, and other similar diversions were very much in vogue, and the King himself was a frequent performer as well as spectator. The books of account at the Chapter-house afford numerous examples of payments for various purposes at Christmas time during this reign; and many interesting extracts may be found in Collier's History of Dramatic Poetry. The payments to the Lord of Misrule, which in Henry the Seventh's time never exceeded £6. 13*s.* 4*d.* were raised by Henry the Eighth in his first year to £8. 6*s.* 8*d.* and subsequently to £15. 6*s.* 8*d.*

Some of the entertainments were of a sumptuous nature: in the 1st year is a payment to "Rob. Amadas vpon his bill for certen plate of gold stuf bought of him for the disguisings," £451. 12*s.* 2*d.*; and another to "Willm̄ Buttry vpon his bill for certen sylks bought of him for the disguysings," £133. 7*s.* 5*d.*

In the 6th year are charges "To Leonard Friscobald for diverse velvets, and other sylks, for the disguysing," £247. 12*s.* 7*d.*; and "To Richard Gybson for certen apparell, &c. for the disguysing at the fest of Cristemes last," £137. 14*s.* ½*d.* Con-

siderable payments are made to the same Gybson in after years for the same purpose, particularly in the 11th, for the revells, called a Maskelyn.

In the 10th year large rewards were given to the gentlemen and children of the King's Chapel; the former having £13. 6*s.* 8*d.* for their good attendance in Xtemas; and "Mr. Cornisse for playing affore the king opon newyeres day at nyght with the children," £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*

In the 17th year of this reign (1525) there was a great sickness and mortality in London, and the King therefore kept his Christmas quietly at Eltham, whence it was called the "still Christmas." This however did not satisfy the haughty Cardinal Wolsey, who "laye at the Manor of Richemond, and there kept open housholde, to lordes, ladies, and all other that would come, with plaies and disguisyng in most royall maner; whiche sore greued the people, and in especiall the kynges seruauntes, to se hym kepe an open Court, and the kyng a secret Court."*

The King made himself amends for this cessation by the festivities of subsequent years, and Greenwich was frequently resorted to during this season. In 1527 there was a "solemne Christmas" held there "with revels, maskes, disguisings, and banquets; and the thirtieth of *December*, and third of *January* were solemne Justs holden, when at night the King and fifteen other with him, came to *Bridewel*, and there putting on masking apparell, took his barge, and rowed to the Cardinalls (Woolsey) place, where were at supper many Lords and Ladyes, who danced with the maskers, and after the dancing was made a great Banquet."†

The lower classes still practising the ceremo-

* Hall's Chronicle, 17 Hen. VIII.

† Baker's Chronicle, p. 393.

nies and superstitions of their forefathers, added to them some imitations of the revelries of their superiors, but, as may be supposed, of a grosser description; and many abuses were committed. It was therefore found necessary by an Act passed in the 3d year of Henry VIII. to order that no persons should appear abroad like mummers, covering their faces with vizors, and in disguised apparel, under pain of three months' imprisonment: and a penalty of 20*s.* was declared against such as kept vizors in their houses for the purpose of mumming. It was not intended, however, to debar people from proper recreations during this season, but on the contrary we have reason to believe that many indulgences were afforded to them, and that landlords and masters assisted them with the means of enjoying the customary festivities; listening to their tales of legendary lore, round the yule-block, when weary of more boisterous sports, and encouraging them by their presence, as is yet the case in some parts of the country, though the practice is unfortunately gradually wearing out.

The working classes at this period were professedly allowed greater privileges at Christmas than at any other part of the year.* The Act of 11 Hen. VII. c. 2, against unlawful games, expressly forbids Artificers, Labourers, Servants, or Apprentices, to play at any such, but in Christmas;

* There is the form of a proclamation made by the Sheriff of York, given by Leland (Itinerary, vol. iv. p. 182), where the encouragement is so extended as to appear almost ironical. It contains the following passage:—

"Also that all manner of whores and theives, dice-players, carders, and all other unthrifty folke, be welcome to the towne, whether they come late or early, att the reverence of the high feast of *Youle*, till the twelve dayes be passed."

and then only in their masters' houses by the latter; and a penalty of 6*s.* 8*d.* was incurred by any householder allowing such games, except during those holidays; which, according to Stow, extended from All-hallows evening to the day after Candlemas-day. The Act of 33 Henry VIII. c. 9, enacts more particularly, "That no manner of Artificer or Craftsman of any handicraft or occupation, Husbandman, Apprentice, Labourer, Servant at husbandry, Journeyman, or Servant of artificer, Mariners, Fishermen, Watermen, or any Serving-man, shall from the said feast of the Nativity of St. *John Baptist,* play at the Tables, Tennis, Dice, Cards, Bowls, Clash, Coyting, Logating, or any other unlawful Game, out of *Christmas,* under the pain of xx*s.* to be forfeit for every time; and in *Christmas* to play at any of the said Games in their Masters' houses, or in their Masters' presence."

Many of the nobility imitated the royal splendour in the arrangement of their domestic establishments, maintaining such numerous retinues as to constitute a miniature court. The various household books that still exist shew the state in which they lived; among these, that of the Northumberland family is the best known, having been printed, and frequently quoted. It appears from the regulations here laid down, (1512,) that the "Almonar" was frequently "a maker of Interludys;" and if so, "than he to have a servaunt to the intent for writynge of the Parts; and ells to have non." The persons on the establishment of the chapel performed plays from some sacred subject during Christmas; as "My lorde usith and accustomyth to gyf yerely, if his lordship kepe a chapell and be at home, them of his lordschipes chapell, if they doo play the Play of the NATIVITE uppon cristynmes day in the mornnynge in my lords chapell befor his

lordship, xx*s*." Other players were however permitted and encouraged, and a Master of the Revells appointed to superintend. And "My lorde useth and accustomyth yerly to gyf hym which is ordynede to be the MASTER OF THE REVELLS yerly in my lordis hous in cristmas for the overseyinge and orderinge of his lordschips Playes, Interludes, and Dresinge that is plaid befor his lordship in his hous in the xijth dayes of Cristenmas, and they to have in rewarde for that caus yerly, xx*s*."

In a volume of accounts of the Earl of Northumberland at the Chapter-house, quoted by Collier,* 13*s*. 4*d*. is the price paid to his chaplain, William Peres, in the 17th Henry VIII. "for makyng an Enterlued to be playd this next Cristenmas." The Princess (afterwards Queen) Mary was indulged from her childhood with the usual ceremonies and festivities in her own household, although as she grew up, and her temper got soured, she probably lost all enjoyment of such scenes. Before she had completed her sixth year, Christmas revels were exhibited for her entertainment, and she was accustomed to give presents to the King's players, the children of the chapel, and others. Ellis, in his "Original Letters,"† gives the following curious application from the council for the household of the Lady Mary, to the all powerful Cardinal Wolsey about 1525, to obtain his directions and leave to celebrate the ensuing Christmas; so necessary was his sanction then to every public transaction.

"Please it youre grace for the great repaire of straungers supposed unto the Pryncesse honorable householde this solempne fest of Cristmas, We

* Hist. Dram. Poetry, vol. i. p. 85—6.

† Vol. i. p. 271. From MS. Cotton. Vesp. F. xiii. fol. 134.

humbly beseche the same to let us knowe youre gracious pleasure concernyng aswell a ship of silver for the almes disshe requysite for her high estate, and spice plats, as also for trumpetts and a rebek to be sent, and whither we shall appoynte any Lord of Mysrule for the said honorable householde, provide for enterluds, disgysyngs, or pleyes in the said fest, or for banket on twelf nyght. And in likewise whither the Pryncesse shall sende any newe yeres gifts to the Kinge, the Quene, your Grace, and the Frensshe quene, and of the value and devise of the same. Besechyng youre grace also to pardon oure busy and importunate suts to the same in suche behalf made. Thus oure right syngler good lorde, We pray the holy Trynyte have you in his holy preservacion. At Teoxbury, the xxvij day of November.

Your humble orators,

JOHN EXON.
JEILEZ GREVILE.
PETER BURNELL.
JOHN SALTER.
G. BROMLEY.
THOMAS AUDELEY."

"To the most reverent
Father in God the Lord
Cardinall his good grace."

About this time the Christmasses at the Inns of Court became celebrated, especially those at Lincoln's Inn, which had kept them as early as the 9th of Henry VI. The Temples and Gray's Inn afterwards disputed the palm with it. The first particular account of any regulations for conducting one of these grand Christmasses is in the 9th of Henry VIII.;* when, besides the King for Christmas-day, the Marshal and the Master of the Revels, it is ordered that the King of Cockneys, on

* Dugdale, Orig. Jurid.

Childermas-day, should sit and have due service, and "that Jack Straw, and all his adherents, should be thenceforth utterly banished, and no more to be used in this house, upon pain to forfeit for every time five pounds, to be levied on every fellow hapning to offend against this rule."

Of Jack Straw and his offences, I confess my ignorance; perhaps something in the nature of an anti-masque, or suspected of treasonable practices against the King of the Cockneys, and unpopular with the aristocratic or elder part of the community, from the amount of the fine imposed. The Society of Gray's Inn, however, in 1527, got into a worse scrape than permitting Jack Straw and his adherents, for they acted a play (the first on record at the Inns of Court) during this Christmas, the effect whereof was, that Lord Governance was ruled by Dissipation and Negligence, by whose evil order Lady Public Weal was put from Governance. * Cardinal Wolsey, conscience-smitten, thought this to be a reflection on himself, deprived the author, Serjeant Roe, of his coif, and committed him to the Fleet, together with Thomas Moyle, one of the actors, until it was satisfactorily explained to him.

It was found necessary from time to time to make regulations to limit the extent of these revels and plays, and to provide for the expences, which were considerable, and they were therefore not performed every year. In 1531 the Lincoln's Inn Society agreed that if the two Temples kept Christmas, they would also, not liking to be outdone. In 1550 an order was made in Gray's Inn that no Comedies, commonly called Interludes, should be acted in the refectory in the intervals of vacation,

* Baker's Chronicle, 393–4.

except at the celebration of Christmas; and that then the whole body of students should jointly contribute towards the dresses, scenes, and decorations.

During the short reign of the youthful monarch Edward the Sixth, the splendour of the royal Christmasses somewhat abated, though they were still continued; and the King being much grieved at the condemnation of the Duke of Somerset, it was thought expedient to divert his mind by additional pastimes at the following Christmas (1553). George Ferrers of Lincoln's Inn, a gentleman of some rank, was therefore appointed Lord of Misrule, or Master of the King's pastimes, and acquitted himself so well as to afford great delight and satisfaction. The expences on the occasion were more than £700.

The troubled reign of Mary was not congenial to these sports, though they were still kept up with spirit in different parts of the country; but in the first Christmas after the accession of Queen Elizabeth there were plays and entertainments before her; the former however unfortunately contained some offensive, and probably indecent matter, as the actors were commanded to leave off. Elizabeth, like her father, was fond of pomp and show, and particularly encouraged theatrical exhibitions. Complaints however having been made of the expence of these entertainments, she determined to control them, and directed an estimate to be made in the second year of her reign for the masks and pastimes to be shewn before her at Christmas and Shrovetide, Sir Thomas Cawarden being then, as he had for some time previous been, Master of the Revells. The estimate amounted to £227. 11*s.* 2*d.* being nearly £200 less than the expences in former

years.* This control over the expences, however, must soon have ceased, for soon afterwards the sums were much increased. She had plays performed before her at Christmas during the greater part of her reign, and the drama assumed a more regular form. "Ferrex and Porrex," the first regular tragedy, and "Gammer Gurton's Needle," were both produced in the commencement of her reign, and in the after part the unrivalled Shakspeare caused a new era in dramatic literature.

Amongst other performances, Collier† mentions one by the boys of the "grammer skolle" of Westminster, in January 1564-5; and in 1573 the children of Westminster, upon New Yeares Daye at night, performed one called "Truth, Faithfulnesse, and Mercye." This custom of acting plays at or near Christmas, is preserved at Westminster School still, by the representation of one of Terence's plays in the beginning of December. Masques and pageants were in great request as well as plays; and the Inns of Court vied with each other in the magnificence of their revels.

In the 4th of Elizabeth, there was a splendid Christmas kept at the Inner Temple, wherein Lord Robert Dudley (afterwards Earl of Leicester) was the chief person, Constable and Marshal, under the name of Palaphilos, and Christopher Hatton (afterwards Chancellor) was Master of the Game. Previous to this, a sort of parliament was held on St. Thomas's eve, to decide whether they should keep it, and if so, to publish the officers' names, and then "in token of joy and good liking, the bench and company pass beneath the hearth and sing a carol, and so to boyer."

* Collier, Hist. vol. i. p. 174. † Vol. i. p. 190.

At these grand Christmasses there were revels and dancing during the twelve days of Christmas. It was about this time that "Ferrex and Porrex" was acted before the Queen by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple; the printer stating it to be "for furniture of part of the grand Christmasse in the Inner Temple." The order of the usual Christmas amusements at the inns of court at this period, would cause some curious scenes if carried into effect in the present day. Barristers singing and dancing before the judges, serjeants, and benchers, would "draw a house," if spectators were admitted. Of so serious import was this dancing considered, that by an order in Lincoln's Inn, of February, 7th James I. the under barristers were by decimation put out of commons, because the whole bar offended by not dancing on Candlemas day preceding, according to the ancient order of the society, when the judges were present; with a threat that if the fault were repeated, they should be fined or disbarred. Dugdale* gives the following description of the Inner Temple revels, the three grand days being All-hallown, Candlemass, and Ascension day.

"First, the solemn Revells (after dinner, and the play ended,) are begun by the whole House, Judges, Sergeants at Law, Benchers; the Utter and Inner Barr; and they led by the *Master of the Revells:* and one of the Gentlemen of the Utter Barr are chosen to sing a Song to the Judges, Serjeants, or Masters of the Bench; which is usually performed; and in default thereof, there may be an amerciament. Then the Judges and Benchers take their places, and sit down at the upper end of the Hall. Which done, the *Utter-Barristers,* and

* Orig. Jurid. p. 161.

Inner-Barristers, perform a second solemn Revell before them. Which ended, the *Utter-Barristers* take their places and sit down. Some of the Gentlemen of the *Inner-Barr*, do present the House with dancing, which is called the *Post Revells*, and continue their Dances, till the Judges or Bench think meet to rise and depart."

In 1594 there was a celebrated Christmas at Gray's Inn, of which an account was published under the title of "Gesta Grayorum," so called in consequence of the great popularity at that time of the Gesta Romanorum. The entertainments appear to have been heavy and pedantic in their nature, though suited to the style of the age. The concluding performance was a Masque before the Queen at Shrovetide, containing much of that flattery which prevailed in all exhibitions before her, being always expected by her. She was so much pleased with the performance, that on the courtiers dancing a measure after the Masque was ended, she exclaimed, "What! shall we have bread and cheese after a banquet?" Mr. Henry Helmes was the prince chosen, who assumed the following style, and had a numerous court to support him.

"The High and Mighty Prince, HENRY Prince of *Purpoole*, Arch-duke of *Stapulia* and *Bernardia*, Duke of *High* and *Nether Holborn*, Marquis of St. *Giles* and *Tottenham*, Count Palatine of *Bloomsbury* and *Clerkenwell*, Great Lord of the Cantons of *Islington*, *Kentish-Town*, *Paddington* and *Knightsbridge*, Knight of the most Heroical Order of the *Helmet*, and Sovereign of the *same*."

These royal and public pageants allured many country gentlemen to the metropolis, who neglecting the comforts of their dependants in the country at this season, dissipated in town part of their means for assisting them, and incapacitated them-

selves from continuing that hospitality for which the country had been so long noted. In order to check this practice, the gentlemen of Norfolk and Suffolk were in 1589 commanded to depart from London before Christmas, and to repair to their countries, and there to keep hospitality amongst their neighbours. The presence of the higher classes would have controlled the tendency to drinking and riotous sports among the country people, which the resort of minstrels and other strollers at this time to taverns and ale-houses encouraged; while their real enjoyments would have been increased through the assistance and fostering care of their superiors, bearing in mind the recommendation of a quaint and well-known writer of this age, Thomas Tusser, in his "Hundreth good pointes of Husbandrie."

"At Christmas be mery, and thanke god of all:
And feast thy pore neighbours, the great with the small.
Yea al the yere long haue an eie to the poore:
And god shall sende luck, to kepe open thy doore."

Masques and plays, with other Christmas festivities, continued throughout the reign of James the First, and the Prince (Charles) himself occasionally performed, and in particular gained great applause in Ben Jonson's Mask, "The Vision of Delight, or Prince's Mask,"* performed on Twelfth-night in 1617–18, when the Muscovy Ambassadors were feasted at court; and £750 were issued for the

* Ben Jonson wrote several Masks that were represented before the court during this reign: amongst others the Mask of Christmas, presented in 1616, wherein the principal characters are Christmas and his children, namely, Mis-Rule, Caroll, Minc'd-Pie, Gamboll, Post and Pair, New-Year's-Gift, Mumming, Wassall, Offering, and Baby-Cocke.

necessary preparations. A Masque of ladies had been prepared for the same occasion, which for some reason was not allowed by the King and Queen.

In 1607 there was a grand exhibition of the Christmas Prince at St. John's College, Oxford, of which a description was printed. It was conducted with the accustomed ceremonies, but with more than usual pomp. A very numerous court was appointed, and pageants and dramatic performances were from time to time exhibited, the Prince (Mr. Thomas Tucker) occasionally issuing orders for the good conduct of the common weal, and for raising the supplies, which, as may be supposed, were principally in the nature of benevolences. The Prince did not resign his office until Shrove Tuesday, and on the following Saturday the sports were concluded with a play, which there had not previously been time for. In the course of it some disturbances arose, caused by the numerous persons who were unable to find room within the building, but they were fortunately quelled without any serious mischief. This account was reprinted in 1816, and is therefore within reach of the curious in these matters.

The winter amusements in vogue at this period may be seen by the following extract from Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.*

"The ordinary recreations which we have in winter, and in most solitary times busie our minds with, are *Cardes*, *Tables* and *Dice*, *Shovelboard*, *Chesse-play*, the Philosopher's game, small trunkes, shuttle-cocke, billiards, musicke, masks, singing, dancing, ulegames, frolicks, jests, riddles, catches, purposes, questions and commands, merry tales of

* Ed. 1638, p. 271.

errant Knights, Queenes, Lovers, Lords, Ladies, Giants, Dwarfes, Theeves, Cheaters, Witches, Fayries, Goblins, Friers," &c.

During the reign of Charles the First, until the year 1641, or thereabouts, when the national troubles interfered with all similar amusements, and the spirit of fanaticism endeavoured to abolish any commemoration of the Nativity of our Saviour, masks and pageants were continued at court during Christmas, and frequently with great splendour. In 1630-1, the Queen and her ladies presented a mask called "Love's Triumph through Callipolis," and the King, with certain lords and gentlemen, one called "Chloridia," both written by Ben Jonson. In 1632-3 the Queen got up a Pastoral in Somerset House, in which it would seem she herself took a part. There were masks at the same time, independently of this performance, the cost of which considerably exceeded £2000, besides that portion of the charge which was borne by the office of the Revels, and charged to the accounts of that department.*

On 23d Dec. 1632, a grant of £450 was made to George Kirke, Esq. Gentleman of the Robes, for the masking attire of the King and his party. The King and Queen, with many of the courtiers, were in the habit of joining in these amusements,—a practice of early date also in France. Margaret de Valois, Queen of Navarre, wrote Moralities in 1540, which she called Pastorals, to be acted by the ladies of her court.† On the 13th Dec. 1637, a warrant under Privy Seal was issued to the same George Kirke for £150 to provide masking apparel

* See Collier's Hist. Dram. Poetry, for particulars of this and many other similar entertainments.

† Warton's History of Poetry, vol. iii. p. 227, n.

for the King; and on the 1st of the same month Edmund Taverner had a warrant for £1400 towards the charge of a mask to be presented at Whitehall the next Twelfth Night. A similar sum for a similar purpose was granted to Michael Oldisworth on 3rd January 1639-40. Many interesting particulars connected with the royal masks will be found in Nichols's "Progresses of Elizabeth and James the First."

The Inns of Court continued to maintain their celebrity for these entertainments.* In 1635, in particular, there was a splendid one at the Middle Temple, when Mr. Francis Vivian, a gentleman of Cornwall, son of Sir Francis Vivian, was elected the Christmas Prince, and expended £2000 out of his own pocket to support his character with becoming state. But their revels were not confined to Christmas, for in February 1633 there was a celebrated mask called "The Triumph of Peace," presented jointly by the two Temples, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn, which cost the Societies above £20,000. Evelyn in his Memoirs relates, that on 15th December, 1641, he was elected one of the Comptrollers of the Middle Temple revellers, "as the fashion of ye young Students and Gentlemen was, the Christmas being kept this yeare with greate solemnity;" but he got excused from serving.

An order still existed directing the nobility and gentry who had mansion-houses in the country "to repair to them to keep hospitality meet to their degrees;" as Sir J. Astley, on 20th of March, 1637-8, in consequence of ill health, obtained a licence to reside in London, or where he pleased,

* By an order, 17th Nov. 4th Charles I. all playing at Dice, Cards, or otherwise, is forbidden at Gray's Inn, except during the 20 days in Christmas.

at Christmas, or at any other times:* which proves such a licence to have been requisite.

The noblemen and gentlemen of fortune lived when in the country like petty princes, and in the arrangement of their households copied that of their sovereigns, having officers of the same name and import, and even heralds wearing their coat of arms at Christmas, and other solemn feasts, crying largesse thrice at the proper times. They feasted in their halls, where many of the Christmas sports were performed. When coals began to be introduced, the hearth was commonly in the middle, whence, according to Aubrey, is the saying, "Round about our coal-fire." Christmas was considered as the commemoration of a holy festival, to be observed with cheerfulness as well as devotion. The comforts and personal gratification of their dependants were provided for by the landlords, their merriment encouraged, and their sports joined. The working man looked forward to Christmas as the portion of the year which repaid his former toils; and gratitude for the worldly comforts then received would occasion him to reflect on the eternal blessings bestowed on mankind by the event then commemorated.

Herrick, a writer of the former part of the 17th Century, in "A New Yeares Gift sent to Sir Simeon Steward," included in his "Hesperides," sings

"Of Christmas sports, the wassel-boule,
That tost up after Fox-i'-th'-hole;
Of Blind-man-buffe, and of the care
That young men have to shooe the Mare;
Of twelf-tide cakes, of pease and beanes,
Wherewith ye make those merry sceanes,

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* Collier's History, vol. ii. p. 89, note.

When as ye chuse your king and queen,
And cry out, 'Hey for our town green.'
Of ash-heapes, in the which ye use
Husbands and wives by streakes to chuse;
Of crackling laurell, which fore-sounds
A plentious harvest to your grounds;
Of these, and such like things, for shift,
We send in stead of New-yeares gift."

He finishes with

"And thus, throughout, with Christmas playes
Frolick the full twelve holy-dayes."*

The Carol, by George Withers, printed in the following collection, contains many allusions to the customs attending the feast. But now a cessation was about to take place in these sports. In 1642 the first ordinances were issued to suppress the performance of plays, and hesitation was expressed as to the manner of keeping Christmas. Some shops in London were even opened on Christmas-day 1643, part of the people being fearful of a Popish observance of the day. The Puritans gradually prevailed, and in 1647 some parish officers were committed for permitting ministers to preach upon Christmas-day, and for adorning the Church.†

On the 3rd of June in the same year, it was ordained by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the feast of the Nativity of Christ, with other holidays, should be no longer observed, and that all scholars, apprentices, and other servants, with the leave and approbation of their masters, should have such relaxation from labour on the second Tuesday in every month as they used to

* Herrick's Works, 8vo. 1823, vol. i. p. 176-7.

† Nichols's "Illustrations of Manners and Expences," p. 53. Church-Wardens Accompts of St. Margaret's, Westminster, 1647.

have from such Festivalls and Holy dayes: and in Canterbury, on the 22nd of December following, the crier went round by direction of the Mayor, and proclaimed that Christmas-day and all other superstitious festivals should be put down, and a market kept upon that day.

After the defeat of the royalists, and the execution of the monarch, the ruling manners of the age were marked by austerity, sometimes accompanied by hypocrisy, little favourable therefore to festive amusements, however innocent. The Parliament, by an order dated the 24th of December 1652, directed, "That no observation shall be had of the five and twentieth day of December, commonly called Christmas Day; nor any solemnity used or exercised in churches upon that day in respect thereof." And Evelyn states in his Memoirs,* that as he and his wife, with others, were taking the sacrament on Christmas-day 1657, the chapel was surrounded by soldiers, and the assembly taken into custody and examined for celebrating the Nativity against the ordinance of the Commonwealth; but were let off. Still the Christmas customs and festivities could not be abolished by the harsh measures of the republicans, though banished from high places (if any such could then be so called), and practised by stealth or in privacy, and without ostentation. The motto of No. 37, of "Mercurius Democritus," from December 16th to December 22nd 1652, begins,

> Old Christmas now is come to town,
> Though few do him regard,
> He laughs to see them going down
> That have put down his Lord.

In "The Vindication of Christmas," 4to. 1653,

* Vol. ii. p. 126–7.

a mock complaint in the character of Father Christmas, he laments the treatment he had received for the last twelve years, and that he was even then but coolly received, adding, "But welcome, or not welcome, I am come;" he says, his "best and freest welcome with some kinde of countrey farmers was in Devonshire," (in which we may fairly include Cornwall, where the customs are still so zealously preserved,) thus describing his entertainment among them (pp. 7—8).

"After dinner we arose from the boord, and sate by the fire, where the harth was imbrodered all over with roasted apples, piping hot, expecting a bole of ale for a cooler, which immediately was transformed into warm lambwool. After which, we discoursed merily, without either prophaness or obscenity; some went to cards; others sung carols, and pleasant songs (suitable to the times); then the poor laboring Hinds, and Maid-servants, with the plow-boys, went nimbly to dancing; the poor toyling wretches being glad of my company, because they had little or no sport at all till I came amongst them; and therefore they skipped and leaped for joy, singing a carol to the tune of hey,

"Let's dance and sing, and make good chear,
For Christmas comes but once a year:
Draw hogsheads dry, let flagons fly,
For now the bells shall ring;
Whilst we endeavor to make good
The title 'gainst a King.

"Thus at active games, and gambols of hot-cockles, shooing the wild mare, and the like harmless sports, some part of the tedious night was spent."

After the Restoration an effort was made to revive the Christmas amusements at Court at Whitehall, but they do not appear ever to have

recovered their former splendour. The habits of Charles the Second were of too sensual a nature to induce him to interest himself in such pursuits; besides which the manners of the country had been changed during the sway of the Puritan party. A pastoral however, called "CALISTO," written by Crowne, was acted by the daughters of the Duke of York and the young nobility. About the same time the Lady Anne, afterwards Queen, acted the part of Semandra, in Lee's Mithridates. Betterton and his wife instructed the performers: in remembrance of which, when Anne came to the throne, she gave the latter a pension of £100 a-year.

The Inns of Court also had their Christmas feasts; but the conduct of them was probably not so much coveted as in former times, as there is an entry in the records of Gray's Inn, on 3rd November 1682, "That Mr. Richard Gipps, on his promise to perform the office of Master of the Revels, this and the next Term, be called to the Bar of Grace," *i. e.* without payment of the usual fees: thus holding out a reward for his services, instead of allowing him, as in former times, to spend a large portion of his private fortune, unrequited, except by the honour of the temporary office.

The Rev. Henry Teonge, chaplain of one of our ships of war, gives in his Diary (1825, p. 127–8.) a description of the manner in which the Christmas was spent on board in 1675.

"Dec. 25, 1675.—Crismas day wee keepe thus. At 4 in the morning our trumpeters all doe flatt their trumpetts, and begin at our Captain's cabin, and thence to all the officers' and gentlemen's cabins; playing a levite at each cabine door, and bidding good morrow, wishing a merry Crismas. After they goe to their station, viz. on the poope, and sound 3 levitts in honour of the morning. At

10 wee goe to prayers and sermon; text, Zacc. ix. 9. Our Captaine had all his officers and gentlemen to dinner with him, where wee had excellent good fayre: a ribb of beife, plumb-puddings, minct pyes, &c. and plenty of good wines of severall sorts; dranke healths to the King, to our wives and friends, and ended the day with much civill myrth."

The spirit of the Christmas festivities had abated during the Commonwealth in many parts of the country, particularly where great establishments had become extinct; and on the restoration of Monarchy it required some time to revive them properly again. Many of the popular songs of the day complain of this, and contrast them with former times,—a species of grumbling, however, as ancient as ballad writing, or Homer himself. Nedham, in his History of the Rebellion (1661), bewails the decline of Christmas, in consequence of Puritanism, and says,

Gone are those golden days of yore,
When Christmass was a high day:
Whose sports we now shall see no more;
'Tis turn'd into Good Friday.

In a ballad called "The old and young Courtier," printed in 1670, comparing the times of Queen Elizabeth with those of her successors, the 5th and 12th verses contain the following parallel respecting Christmas:—

V.

With a good old fashion, when Christmasse was come,
To call in all his old neighbours with bagpipe and drum,
With good chear enough to furnish every old room,
And old liquor, able to make a cat speak, and man dumb.
Like an old courtier of the Queen's,
And the Queen's old courtier.

XII.

With a new fashion, when Christmas is drawing on,
On a new journey to London straight we all must begone,
And leave none to keep house, but our new porter John,
Who relieves the poor with a thump on the back with a stone;
Like a young courtier of the King's,
And the King's young courtier.*

Another called "Time's Alteration; or, the Old Man's Rehearsal, what brave dayes he knew a great while agone, when his old cap was new," sings,

A man might then behold,
At Christmas, in each hall,
Good fires to curb the cold,
And meat for great and small:
The neighbours were friendly bidden,
And all had welcome true,
The poor from the gates were not chidden,
When this old cap was new.

Black jacks to every man
Were fill'd with wine and beer;
No pewter pot nor can
In those days did appear:
Good cheer in a nobleman's house
Was counted a seemly shew;
We wanted no brawn nor souse,
When this old cap was new.†

Another of a somewhat similar, though of a less querulous nature, and rejoicing at the renewal of Christmas customs, after they had ceased for a time, is printed at length in the ensuing collection (p. 53). Poor Robin for 1695, mentions Christmas with equal zest, when he seems to feast in idea on the good things of the season, in the Christmas song or carol from which the following lines are taken.‡

* Percy's Reliques, vol. ii. pp. 352—4.
† Evans's Ballads, vol. iii. 262.
‡ Brand's Popular Antiq. by Ellis, vol. i. pp. 380–1.

Now thrice welcome, Christmas,
  Which brings us good cheer,
Minc'd-pies and plumb-porridge,
  Good ale and strong beer;
With pig, goose, and capon,
  The best that may be,
So well doth the weather
  And our stomachs agree.

Observe how the chimneys
  Do smoak all about,
The cooks are providing
  For dinner, no doubt;
But those on whose tables
  No victuals appear,
O may they keep Lent
  All the rest of the year!

* * * * *
* * * * *

But as for curmudgeons,
  Who will not be free,
I wish they may die
  On the three-legged tree.

The masques and pageants at court gradually declined, and at first were succeeded by feasts and entertainments, until these in turn were omitted. The New Year's Ode of the Poet Laureate in process of time was itself forgotten, and even that lingering relic of royal Christmasses, plum-porridge, of which, until lately, a tureen was served up to the chaplains at St. James's, is now discarded: the only ceremony now left being, if I am not mistaken, the offering at the altar on Twelfth-day.

The Christmas feasts in the establishments of noblemen and gentlemen of wealth abated in splendour and hospitality more gradually than those of the royal household, and are still kept up in parts of the country, but each succeeding festival finds them fewer in number.

An amusing little book, called "Round about our Coal-Fire, or Christmas Entertainments," gives an account of the manner of observing this festival among the middling classes towards the beginning of last century, and as the writer draws a contrast between his and former times, in the like spirit of grumbling, he may be supposed to give some insight into the amusements of a century preceding himself. He says, that "the manner of celebrating this great course of holydays is vastly different now to what it was in former days: There was once upon a time Hospitality in the Land; an *English* Gentleman at the opening of the great day, had all his Tenants and Neighbours enter'd his hall by day-break, the strong-beer was broach'd, and the black-jacks went plentifully about with toast, sugar, nutmeg, and good Cheshire cheese; the rooms were embower'd with holly, ivy, cypress, bays, laurel, and missleto, and a bouncing *Christmas* log in the chimney glowing like the cheeks of a country milk-maid; then was the pewter as bright as *Clarinda*, and every bit of brass as polished as the most refined Gentleman; the Servants were then running here and there, with merry hearts and jolly countenances; every one was busy in welcoming of Guests, and look'd as snug as new-lick'd puppies; the Lasses were as blithe and buxom as the maids in good Queen *Bess's* days, when they eat sirloins of roast beef for breakfast; *Peg* would scuttle about to make a toast for *John*, while *Tom* run *harum scarum* to draw a jug of ale for *Margery*." And afterwards, "This great festival was in former times kept with so much freedom and openness of heart, that every one in the country where a Gentleman resided, possessed at least a day of pleasure in the

Christmas holydays; the tables were all spread from the first to the last, the sir-loyns of beef, the minc'd-pies, the plumb-porridge, the capons, turkeys, geese, and plumb-puddings, were all brought upon the board; and all those who had sharp stomachs and sharp knives, eat heartily and were welcome, which gave rise to the proverb,

Merry in the Hall, when beards wag all.

There were then turnspits employed, who by the time dinner was over, would look as black and as greasy as a Welch porridge-pot, but the Jacks have since turned them all out of doors. The geese, which used to be fatted for the honest neighbours, have been of late sent to *London*, and the quills made into pens to convey away the Landlord's estate; the sheep are drove away to raise money to answer the loss at a game at dice or cards, and their skins made into parchment for deeds and indentures; nay, even the poor innocent bee, who was used to pay its tribute to the Lord once a year at least in good metheglin, for the entertainment of the guests, and its wax converted into beneficial plaisters for sick neighbours, is now used for the sealing of deeds to his disadvantage."

He gives a ridiculous instance of the influence of the Squire in former times, that if he happened to ask a neighbour what it was o' clock, he returned with a low scrape, "It is what your Worship pleases." He adds, "The spirit of hospitality has not quite forsaken us; several of the gentry are gone down to their respective seats in the country, in order to keep their *Christmas* in the old way, and entertain their tenants and tradesfolks as their ancestors used to do, and I wish them a merry *Christmas* accordingly."

Among the amusements of his own time, he mentions "Mumming, or Masquerading, when the 'Squire's wardrobe is ransacked for dresses of all kinds, and the coal-hole searched around, or corks burnt to black the faces of the fair, or make deputy-mustaches, and every one in the family, except the 'Squire himself, must be transformed from what they were." Blind-man's buff, puss in the corner, questions and commands, hoop and hide, and story-telling, were also resorted to for variety, but cards and dice were seldom set on foot, "unless a lawyer is at hand to breed some dispute for him to decide, or at least have some party in." Dancing was also in great vogue, and here the writer takes an opportunity of saying, "The dancing and singing of the Benchers in the great Inns of Court in *Christmas*, is in some sort founded upon interest; for they hold, as I am informed, some priviledge by dancing about the fire in the middle of their Hall, and singing the song of *Round about our Coal Fire*," &c.

In Major Pearson's collection, in the library of the late Duke of Roxburghe, vol. i. p. 48. in bl. let., is a ballad of older date than this book, called "Christmas Lamentation for the losse of his acquaintance, showing how he is forst to leave the country and come to London. To the tune of *Now Spring is come*,"—which contains similar complaints of the degeneracy of the times, the decay of good fellowship, and the neglect of Christmas by the wealthy: the poet laments, that,

> Since Pride came up with yellow starch,
> Pride and luxury they doe devoure
> House-keeping quite;
> And beggary they doth beget
> In many a knight.

Madam, forsooth, in her coach shee must wheell,
Although she weare her hose out at the heele;
Welladay!
And on her back weare that for a weed,
Which me and all my fellowes would feed, &c.

It begins thus :—

Christmas is my name; farre have I gone,
Have I gone, have I gone, have I gone,
Without regard;
Whereas great men by flocks there be flowne,
There be flowne, there be flowne, there be flowne,
To London ward;
Where they in pomp and pleasure doe waste
That which Christmas was wonted to feast,
Welladay!
Houses where musicke was wont for to ring,
Nothing but bats and howlets doe sing,
Welladay, welladay, welladay!
Where should I stay?
Christmas beefe and bread is turned to stones, &c.
And silken rags;
And ladie Money sleeps, and makes moanes, &c.
In misers bags.
Houses where pleasure once did abound,
Nought but a dogge and a shepheard is found,
Welladay!
Places where Christmas revels did keep,
Is now become habitations for sheepe,
Welladay! &c.
Pan, shepheards' god, doth deface, &c.
Lady Ceres' crowne,
And tillage that doth goe to decay, &c.
In every towne.
Landlords their rents so highly enhance,
That Pierce the plowman barefoot may dance;
Welladay!
And farmers, that Christmas would entertain,
Have scarce wherewith themselves to maintain, &c.*

---

* From Popular Ballads and Songs, by Jamieson, vol. ii. pp. 282–4 n.

In many parts of the kingdom, especially in the northern and western parts, this festival is still kept up with spirit among the middling and lower classes, though its influence is on the wane even with them; the genius of the present age requires work and not play, and since the commencement of this century a great change may be traced. The modern instructors of mankind do not think it necessary to provide for popular amusements, considering mental improvement the one thing needful: and to a great extent they may be right; the exercise of the mind among the working classes serving as a relaxation to bodily labour; as bodily exercise or athletic games serve to relieve from great mental exertion. Conferring on the labouring classes the power of mental recreation, of which they were in general incapable but a few years since, is like bestowing on them an additional sense, and of the highest value if properly directed. Still a cheerful observance of the great festivals of the year may well combine with this popular rage for reading, and the "Schoolmaster" might allow his Christmas holidays to be something more than a mere cessation from labour for a day or two. They might be observed with hospitality and innocent revelry, joined to the religious observances by which as Christians we are bound to shew our gratitude for the unbounded mercy vouchsafed us: for the fulfilment of a promise pronounced in the earliest ages of the world, which was to release us from the dominion of Satan; a promise which even the Pagans in their traditions never lost sight of, although they confused its import with their own superstitious ceremonies, through the darkness of which its glimmering may be traced.

The commencement of this feast is on the eve preceding the Nativity, having been announced by

the waits for several nights previous. The first ceremony, after having properly decked the house with evergreens, including the misseltoe with its pearly berries, is, or should be, to light the Christmas block, or Yule log, a custom of very ancient date. This is a massy piece of wood, frequently the rugged root of a tree, grotesquely marked, and which should burn throughout the holidays, reserving a small piece to light the fire for the Christmas in the ensuing year. According to Drake (Shakspeare and his Times), this was placed "in the centre of the great hall, each of the family in turn sate down upon it, sung a *Yule-Song*, and drank to *a merry Christmas* and a *happy new year*. The family and their friends were feasted with *Yule-Dough* or *Yule-Cakes*, on which were impressed the figure of the child Jesus; and with bowls of *frumenty*, made from wheat cakes or creed wheat, boiled in milk, with sugar, nutmeg, &c. To these succeeded tankards of spiced ale, while preparations were usually going on among the domestics for the hospitalities of the succeeding day." That cheerful writer, Herrick, thus mentions it in his "Ceremonies for Christmasse."

Come, bring with a noise,
My merrie merrie boyes,
The Christmas log to the firing;
While my good dame, she
Bids ye all be free,
And drink to your hearts desiring.

With the last yeeres brand
Light the new block, and
For good successe in his spending,
On your psaltries play,
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is a teending.

Drink now the strong beere,
Cut the white loafe here,

The while the meat is a shredding;
For the rare mince-pie,
And the plums stand by,
To fill the paste that's a kneading.*

Froissart† mentions a Christmas log of a novel description, at a great feast held by Earl Foix on Christmas day, according to his custom. After dinner he went up into a gallery, ascending a staircase of twenty-four steps. It being cold, he complained that the fire was not large enough, on which a person "named Ervalton of Spayne, went down stairs, and seeing in the court a great many asses laden with wood for the house, took up one of the largest of them, with the woode, and laid him on his back, carried him up stairs, and threw him with the wood on the fire, feet upwards, to the marvel of the beholders."

The Yule-Dough, according to Brand, was a little image of paste, intended for the infant Saviour with the Virgin, formerly presented by the bakers to their customers. Presents of sweetmeats and confectionery in the shape of infants, crosses, &c. used to be offered to the holy fathers at Rome. Hone, in his "Every Day Book," mentions a custom at Venice, to eat a kind of pottage, called *torta de lasagne*, composed of oil, onions, paste, parsley, pine nuts, raisins, currants, and candied orange peel; and in some parts of the North of Europe, the peasants make bread in the shape of a boar-pig, and keep it on the table throughout the holidays. In the Noei Borguignon (1720, pp. 236-7), a species of Christmas bread is mentioned, called Foisse, or Fouace, "sorte de pain blanc que les Boulangers cuisent à Dijon la veille de Noël, & dont ils font un

* Herrick's Poems, vol. ii. p. 91.
† Berners' Translation, vol. iv. cap. 23, fol. 24.

très grand débit, parce qu'il n'est pas jusqu'aux plus pauvres gens qui, à l'honneur de la fête, ne veuillent manger de la fouace." These viands, with mince-pies and other Christmas dainties, had probably somewhat the same origin, and that of considerable antiquity. The Wassail Bowl, or Lamb's Wool, is another joyous accompaniment of this eve, a composition of ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast, and roasted crabs or apples, still preserved in many parts.* According to Vallancey,† the term Lamb's Wool is a corruption from *La Mas Ubhal*, the day of the apple fruit, pronounced *Lamasool*. The term Wassail, or Wassel, is generally derived from the salutation of Rowena, daughter of the Saxon Hengist, to the British King Vortigern, in the early part of the 5th century, when she presented him with a bowl of some favourite liquor, welcoming him with the words "Louerd king wass-heil," to which he answered as he was directed, "Drinc heile." She appears, however, only to have made use of a form of speech already known. The term wasseling has at any rate, from a very early period, been used for jovial revelry and carousing,‡ and the wassel-bowl has been particularly appropriated to this time of the year.

Among the ordinances for Henry the Seventh's household, the steward, when he enters with the Wassel, is directed "to cry three times, Wassell, Wassell, Wassell, to which the chappell (probably gentlemen of the chapel) to answere with a good

* In Summer's "Last Will and Testament," by Nash, 1600, Christmas is personified

——— "Sitting in a corner turning crabs,
Or coughing o'er a warmed pot of ale."

† Collectanea, iii. 444.

‡ "The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassel."—*Hamlet*, act 1. sc. 4.

song." There were regular Wassail-songs, of which some ancient specimens may be found in the Harleian MSS. (275 and 541 for instance,) but of no great merit or curiosity, sometimes containing a mixture of Latin and English, not unusual in the monkish times, as thus,

Joy we all now yn this feste
For verbum caro factum est.

The following is, perhaps, one of the most amusing.*

Bryng vs home good ale, s', bryng vs home good ale;
And for our der lady love, brynge vs home good ale.

Brynge home no beff, s', for that ys full of bonys,
But brynge home good ale Inowgh, for I love wyle y^{t}.
But, &c.
Brynge vs home no wetyn brede, for that ys full of braund,
Nothyr no ry brede, for y^{t} ys of y^{t} same.
But, &c.
Brynge vs home no porke, s', for y^{t} ys very fat,
Nethyr no barly brede, for nethyr lovys I y^{t},
But bryng vs home good ale.
Bryng vs home no muttun, s', for y^{t} ys togh and lene,
Nethyr no trypys, for they be seldyn clene.
But, bryng, &c.
Bryng vs home no vele, s', for y^{t} will not dur
But bryng vs home good ale Inogh to drynke by the fyr.
But, &c.
Bryng vs home no sydyr, nor no palde wyne,
For and y^{u} do thow shalt have crysts curse and myne.
But, &c.

In the 17th century the wassel bowl was carried round to the houses of the gentry and others with songs, the bearers expecting a gratuity wherever they proffered it: a custom still preserved in some

* From Harl. MS. 541 (temp. Hen. VI.) and also printed in Ritson's Ancient Songs, pp. xxxiv—v. n.

counties. Most of the great houses also had a wassel-bowl, or cup, frequently of massy silver.* As the hour of twelve approaches, the carol-singers prepare, and the bell-ringers place themselves at their post to usher in the morning of the Nativity with due rejoicing, and bands of music parade the towns. In some of the parishes in the West of England (and perhaps elsewhere) the carol-singers adjourn to the church to sing in Christmas-day, a remnant probably of popery, as in Catholic countries there was church-service frequently at this time, sometimes interspersed with a species of dramatic interlude; the peasantry flocking in to pay their adoration to our Saviour and the Virgin in the course of the holidays.

According to popular superstition, it is not man only that recognizes the sanctity of this morning; for the bees are heard to sing, and the labouring oxen may be seen to kneel, in memory of the oxen at the holy manger. Howison, in his "Sketches of Upper Canada," relates the circumstance of his meeting an Indian at midnight on Christmas eve (during a beautiful moonlight) cautiously creeping along, who beckoned him to silence in vain, and in answer to his inquiries said, "Me watch to see the deer kneel; this is Christmas night, and all the deer fall upon their knees to the Great Spirit, and look up." Supposing the Indian to have been converted, but perhaps imperfectly instructed in Christianity, this is a pleasing instance of unaffected adoration.

The first duty of a Christian on Christmas-day is to repair to his church, to return thanks for the benefit conferred on man; he may then with greater

* Ben Jonson, in his "Masque of Christmas," describes Wassell like a neat sempster and songster; her page bearing a brown bowl dressed with ribbands and rosemary before her.

satisfaction partake of the subsequent feasting and rejoicing, bearing in mind that he should, as far as in his power, or consistent with his station in life, assist at this time his poorer brethren and dependants.

The Britons and Saxons were famed for their hospitality and feasting, and Christmas was probably their principal feast. Thus does Whistlecraft (*alias* Frere), in his most amusing national work, describe the dainties at King Arthur's Christmas:—

> They served up salmon, venison, and wild boars,
> By hundreds, and by dozens, and by scores.
>
> Hogsheads of honey, kilderkins of mustard,
> Muttons, and fatted beeves, and bacon swine;
> Herons and bitterns, peacocks, swan, and bustard,
> Teal, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and in fine,
> Plum-puddings, pancakes, apple-pies, and custard.
> And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine,
> With mead, and ale, and cider of our own;
> For porter, punch, and negus were not known.

After the introduction of the Normans, the manners were still unchanged in this respect, although the style of the entertainments, and nature of the dishes, might from time to time vary. Some of their dainties would rather astonish a party of experimental *gourmands*, or *gourmets*, at present. Imagine a bill of fare, containing diligrout, maupigyrnun, or karumpie, all favourite dishes in the 12th century.* King Edward the Third endea-

* The tenant of the manor of Addington, in Surrey, held it by the service of making a mess of Diligrout on the day of the Coronation. This is supposed to have been the same as the dish called Bardolf, contained among some receipts of the 13th century, the family of that name being then lords of Addington. It was made of almond milk, the brawn of capons, sugar, and spices, chicken parboiled and chopped; and if there were fat or lard in the mess, it was called Maupigyrnun.—*Blount's Fragment. Antiq.* by Beckwith, 4to. 1815, pp. 50–54.

voured to restrain his subjects from over luxury at their meals; and an act was passed at Nottingham in the 10th year of his reign (1336,) to prohibit more than two courses and two sorts of meat in each to any person, "forspris le plus grantz festes del an, cest assavoir la veile & le jour de Noel, le jour de Seint Estiephne, le jour del an renoef,* les jours de la Tiphaynei & de la Purification de nostre Dame," &c. Probably this act, like most other sumptuary laws, was not much attended to; and within a few years after, Chaucer thus describes the Cook, in the prologue to his Canterbury Tales, (l. 381-9.)

> A Coke they hadden with hem for the nones,
> To boile the chikenes and the marie bones,
> And poudre marchant, tart and galingale.
> Wel coude he knowe a draught of London ale.
> He coude roste, and sethe, and broile, and frie,
> Maken mortrewes,† and wel bake a pie.
> But gret harm was it, as it thoughte me,
> That on his shinne a mormal had he.
> For blanc manger that made he with the best.

In his description of the Prioresse‡ he gives a curious specimen of the manners in his times, as we may presume from his statement that the little mistakes which she, who appears as a highly educated woman, contrived to avoid, were not uncommon then, even in good female society.

> At mete was she wel ytaughte withalle;
> She lette no morsel from hire lippes falle,
> Ne wette hire fingres in hire sauce depe.
> Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,

* New Year's Day.

† Mortrewes appears to have been a rich broth or soup, in the preparation whereof the flesh was stamped or beat in a mortar.—*Tyrwhitt's Chaucer*, 8vo. iv. 157, note.

‡ Prologue, l. 127—135.

Thatte no drope ne fell upon hire brest.
In curtesie was sette ful moche hire lest.
Hire over lippe wiped she so clene,
That in hire cuppe was no ferthing sene
Of grese, whan she dronken hadde hire draught.*

In the 16th century Tusser prescribes for Christmas, good drink, a good fire in the hall, brawn, pudding, and mustard withall, capon, or turkey, cheese, apples, and nuts, with jolly carols. Some few years after this the feeding must have been of a more scientific description, though something of the richest, for Massinger, in the City Madam, (act ii. sc. 1.) says,

Men may talk of *Country Christmasses*—
Their thirty-pound butter'd eggs, their pies of carps tongues,
Their pheasants drench'd with ambergris, the carcases
Of three fat wethers bruised for gravy, to
Make sauce for a single peacock; yet their feasts
Were fasts compared with the City's.

Heath,† in the middle of the last century, states that formerly the Christmas feasts were observed with greater magnificence in Cornwall than in any other part of England, but that the clergy had rather discountenanced them, as partaking too much of a celebration of Ceres and Bacchus. However this may be, true Christmas hospitality and many of the good old customs are still preserved in the country, and long may they there flourish.

No one who has not joined actively in these *strenuæ inertiæ* can properly judge of the grateful relaxation they afford from the constant and neces-

* "Le Roman de la Rose," from whence this account was taken by Chaucer, says as to her drinking (l. 14190-1).

"Et si doit si sagement boyre,
Que sur soy n'en espande goutte."

† Account of Scilly Islands, p. 445.

sary labours and anxieties of life; or what satisfaction there is now and then, when *out of school*, in making a useful fool of one's-self.

The Boar's head was a celebrated dish at Christmas, and ushered in with great pomp and ceremony. Some writers have stated it to have been introduced at this feast in abhorrence of Judaism, but there is no sufficient proof, as it was introduced also at other great feasts. Holinshed relates that in the year 1170, King Henry the Second, on the day when his son was crowned, served him at table himself as sewer, bringing up the boar's head, with trumpets before it, "according to the manner."* During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, at the revels of the Inner Temple, "At the first course (on Christmas day) is served in, a fair and large bore's head, upon a silver platter, with minstralsye."

At the time of the celebrated Christmas Prince, at St. John's, Oxford, in 1607, "The first messe was a boar's head, wch was carried by ye tallest and lustiest of all ye guard, before whom (as attendants) wente first, one attired in a horseman's coate, wth a boar's speare in his hande, next to him an other huntsmañ in greene, wth a bloody faucion drawne; next to him 2 pages in tafatye sarcenet, each of y^em^ wth a messe of mustard; next to whome came hee y^t^ carried ye boares-head crost wth a greene silke scarfe, by wch hunge ye empty scabbard of ye faulcion, wch was carried before him. As y^ei^ entred ye hall, he sange this Christmas Caroll, ye three last verses of euerie staffe being repeated after him by ye whole companye."†

Queen's College, Oxford, is famed for its Boar's Head Carol, "Caput apri defero," &c. and the accom-

* Chronicles, vol. iii. p. 76.

† "Christmas Prince," reprint, p. 24. This and the next mentioned Carol are printed in the subsequent pages.

panying ceremony on introducing the head. The boar's head, with a lemon in his mouth, continued long after this to be the first dish at Christmas in great houses, nor is the practice yet entirely obsolete, though in most cases brawn is now substituted for it, the former being rather an expensive dainty, for a dainty it is, *experto crede*. Brawn is a dish of great antiquity, and may be found in most of the old bills of fare, for coronation, and other great feasts. It appears in that for the coronation of Henry the Fourth; and in that of Henry the Seventh, there is a distinction made between "brawne royall" and "brawne;"* the former being probably for the king's table. The begging frere in Chaucer's Sompnoure's Tale (v. 7328-32) applies for brawn, amongst other articles, from which it would appear then not to have been a great rarity.

> Yeve us a bushel whete, or malt, or reye,
> A Goddes kichel, or a trippe of chese,
> Or elles what you list, we may not chese;
> A Goddes halfpeny, or a masse peny;
> Or yeve us of your braun, if ye have any.

Brawn, mustard, and malmsey, were directed for breakfast at Christmas during Queen Elizabeth's reign; and Dugdale, in his account of the Inner Temple revels of the same age, states the same directions for that Society.

The French do not appear to have been so well acquainted with it, for on the capture of Calais by them, they found a large quantity, which they guessed to be some dainty, and tried every means of preparing it; in vain did they roast it, bake it, and boil it, it was impracticable and impenetrable to their culinary arts. Its merits, however, being at length discovered, "Ha!" said the monks, "what

* Sloane MS. 4712.

delightful fish," and immediately added it to their stock of fast-day viands. The Jews, again, could not believe it was procured from that impure beast the hog, and included it in their list of clean animals.

Minced or mince-pies, form another dish of considerable antiquity, and still remain in great request, as an essential article in Christmas dinners; and the stock of mince-meat is frequently not exhausted until Easter. It is also, I believe, customary in London to introduce them on Lord Mayor's Day (November 9th); and in a modern bill of fare for this feast (1832), there are no less than one hundred and eleven dishes of mince-pies included. This savoury article is said to have reference, in the variety of its ingredients, to the offerings of the Wise Men, and the coffin or case of them should be oblong, in imitation of the crache (rack or manger) where our Saviour was laid.

After the Restoration, these pies, with other observances of the same nature, as decorating with evergreens, &c. almost served as a test of a person's opinions; the presbyterian party looking on them as superstitious abominations. They would even refuse to eat them when in distress for a comfortable meal, as is related at first of Bunyan when in confinement. They should have eaten them with a protest, as lawyers would have done in a similar case.

Misson, in his "Travels in England," (p. 322.) in the beginning of the last century, gives the following as the ingredients of a mince-pie. Neats' tongues, chicken, eggs, sugar, currants, lemon and orange peel, with various sorts of spices. The receipts in the present day contain the same leading features, but vary a little in the minutiæ. I have been told by the cognoscenti in mince-pies, that

the best receipts for mince-meat contain little or no meat, and it consequently keeps fresher, and eats lighter. The following is a valued receipt that has been handed down in a Cornish family for many generations, and the hand-writing of the receipt book will vouch for its antiquity. "A pound of beef-suet chopped fine; a pound of raisins do. stoned. A pound of currants cleaned dry. A pound of apples chopped fine. Two or three eggs. Allspice beat very fine, and sugar to your taste. A little salt, and as much brandy and wine as you like. An ancient Cornish custom at Christmas." A small piece of citron in each pie is an improvement.

There is a superstition existing in some places, that in as many different houses as you eat mince-pies during Christmas, so many happy months will you have in the ensuing year. Something like this is mentioned in "Dives and Pauper," by W. de Worde (1496), where a custom is reprobated of judging of the weather of the ensuing twelve months, by that of the twelve days at Christmas. If Christmas-day fell on a Sunday, it was also thought fortunate. In the "Golden Legend," of the same printer, (folio vi.) is a more laudable prejudice, "That what persone beynge in clene lyfe: desyre on thys daye a boone of God; as ferre as it is ryghtfull & good for hym; our lorde at reuerēce of thys blessid & hye feste of his natiuite wol graūt it to hym."

The North of England is celebrated for Christmas pies of a different description, composed of birds and game, and frequently of great size. Hone in his "Table Book," (vol. ii. p. 506.) gives the following extract from the "Newcastle Chronicle" of 6th January 1770, describing a giant of this race. "Monday last was brought from Howick to Ber-

wick, to be shipp'd for London, for Sir Hen. Grey, Bart. a pie, the contents whereof are as follows: viz. 2 bushels of flour, 20lbs. of butter, 4 geese, 2 turkies, 2 rabbits, 4 wild ducks, 2 woodcocks, 6 snipes, and 4 partridges; 2 neat's tongues, 2 curlews, 7 blackbirds, and 6 pigeons: it is supposed a very great curiosity, was made by Mrs. Dorothy Patterson, housekeeper at Howick. It was near nine feet in circumference at bottom, weighs about twelve stones, will take two men to present it to table; it is neatly fitted with a case, and four small wheels to facilitate its use to every guest that inclines to partake of its contents at table." Turkies and geese are also common at Christmas, the latter being the dish in the western counties, while the turkey prevails in London.

In Spain it was customary for patients to send their medical attendants presents of turkeys, so that doctors in large practice had to open a kind of trade in them. Capons were formerly used at this time, probably because many landlords then received them from their tenants. Gascoigne, in 1575, says,

> And when the tenauntes come to paie their quarter's rent,
> They bring some fowle at Midsummer, a dish of fish in Lent,
> At Christmasse a capon, at Michaelmasse a goose;
> And somewhat else at New-yeres tide, *for feare their lease flie loose.*

The liquors drunk at this time were the same as at any other great feast. The Anglo-Saxons, and other northern nations, who in times of paganism drank in honour of Odin, Thor, and their other fabulous deities, afterwards, when converted to Christianity, being unwilling to resign their potations, drank large draughts of liquor in honour of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and other

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Saints. Edward the Confessor drank wine, mead, ale, pigment, morat, and cyder, and so did his successors for some centuries, with the addition perhaps of clarré or claret, garhiofilac, and hypocras.* But good Christmas ale is indispensable,

The nut-brown ale, the nut-brown ale,
Puts downe all drinke when it is stale,
The toast, the nut-meg, and the ginger,
Will make a sighing man a singer.
Ale giues a buffet in the head,
But ginger vnder proppes the brayne;
When ale would strike a strong man dead,
Then nut-megge tempers it againe,
The nut-brown ale, the nut-brown ale,
Puts downe all drinke when it is stale. †

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* Morat was made of honey, diluted with the juice of mulberries.—(*Henry's Hist. England*, vol. iv. 396.) Claret was (red?) wine mixed with honey and spices, and clarified; and garhiofilac (gariophillum, according to Du Cange, meaning girofle, or cloves,) probably something similar in white wine. Henry the Third directs the keepers of his wines at York to deliver to Robert de Monte Pessulano two tuns of white wine to make garhiofilac, and one tun of red wine to make claret for his use, at the approaching Christmas.—*Henry's Hist. England*, vol. viii. 409.)

Ypocras, according to a receipt of the 16th century, was a sort of mulled wine, and thus made on a small scale:—"The crafte to make Ypocras. Take a quarte of red wyne, an unce of synamon, and half an unce of gynger; a quarter of an unce of greynes and of louge pepper, wythe half a pound of sugar; broie all these not too smalle, and then putte them in a bagge of wullen clothe (made therefore) with the wyne, and lette it hange over a vessel tylle the wyne be runne thorow." (N.B. It is presumed the wine should be poured in boiling hot, to gain the spicy flavour.) *Andrews' continuation of Henry's Hist. England*, vol. ii. 292, n. *quoting Arnold's Chronicle of London.*

† From "Specimens of Songs, by Dramatic Writers." Brit. Bibliog. vol. ii. p. 167, being "The Player's Song," from Histrio-mastix.

Croker, in his "Researches in the South of Ireland," (p. 233,) mentions a custom on St. Stephen's Day for the young villagers to carry about from house to house a holly bush adorned with ribbons, having many wrens depending from it, the "Wren boys" chaunting several verses, the burthen of which may be collected from the following lines of their song:—

The Wren, the Wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's day was caught in the furze.
Although he is little, his family's great,
I pray you, good landlady, give us a treat.

My box would speak if it had but a tongue,
And two or three shillings would do it no wrong,
Sing holly, sing ivy—sing ivy, sing holly,
A drop just to drink, it would drown melancholy.

And if you draw it of the best,
I hope in Heaven your soul may rest;
But if you draw it of the small,
It won't agree with the Wren boys at all, &c. &c.

A small piece of money is usually bestowed on them, and the evening concludes with merry-making.

Childermas, or Innocents' Day as is well known, is in commemoration of the slaughter of the children at Bethlehem by command of Herod, and therefore considered a day of unlucky omen; and the day of the week on which it fell was thought unpropitious throughout the year. Brand mentions a custom in Catholic countries on this day, "to run through all the rooms of a house, making a pretended search in and under the beds, in memory of the search made by Herod for the discovery and destruction of the child Jesus, and his having been imposed upon and deceived by the Wise Men, who, contrary to his orders and expectation, 'returned to their own country another way.'" *

* Popular Antiquities, by Ellis, p. 116.

New Year's Eve was observed as a convivial and cordial meeting, as it still continues in some places, and the wassail-bowl was again brought into requisition, and occasionally carried about by young women from door to door with an appropriate song. The following is given in Hone's "Every-day Book," vol. ii. p. 14, as a Wassail Song, sung in Gloucestershire on New Year's Eve, in which I have taken the liberty of introducing the names of the horses, instead of cutting them out into little stars as Juliet wished Romeo to be.

Wassail! Wassail! all over the town,
Our toast it is white, our ale it is brown:
Our bowl it is made of a maplin tree,
We be good fellows all; I drink to thee.

Here 's to Smiler, and to his right ear,
God send our Maister a happy new year;
A happy new year as e'er he did see—
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee.

Here 's to Dobbin, and to his right eye,
God send our Mistress a good Christmas pye:
A good Christmas pye as e'er I did see—
With my wassailing bowl I drink to thee.

Here 's to Filpail, and to her long tail,
God send our Measter us never may fail.
Of a cup of good beer, I pray you draw near,
And then you shall hear our jolly wassail.

Be here any maids, I suppose here be some;
Sure they will not let young men stand on the cold stone,
Sing hey O maids, come trole back the pin,
And the fairest maid in the house let us all in.

Come, butler, come bring us a bowl of the best:
I hope your soul in Heaven will rest:
But if you do bring us a bowl of the small,
Then down fall butler, bowl and all.

Croker, in his "Researches," (p. 233.) states a custom in the South of Ireland on this night of a

cake being thrown against the outside door of each house by the head of the family, to keep out hunger during the ensuing year. The New Year is rung, in, and bands of music parade the towns as on Christmas morn, and in some places (though getting nearly obsolete) the bellman goes round with a copy of verses wishing a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

New Year's Day, or the first of January, was kept by the Romans as a feast in honour of Janus; and according to Brady,* the first mention of it as a Christian festival was in 487, under Pope Felix the Third, who called it the *octave of Christmas;* it having been originally kept by the more zealous primitive Christians as a fast, to distinguish it from the customs of the heathens. Under the title of the Circumcision, it is only to be traced from the end of the 11th century; and it was not generally so observed, until it was included in our Liturgy in the year 1550. It was, however, a day of feasting for some centuries before this, and, with Christmas-day and Twelfth-day, one of the most marked days throughout the holidays. After Edward the Third had fought incognito in a severe battle at Calais, under the banners of Sir Walter de Manny, and overcome the French on the 31st day of Dec. 1348, he entertained the captive knights on the following day, to celebrate the New Year. Henry the Eighth, in the early part of his reign, (before the uncontrolled indulgence of his passions had demoralized a disposition naturally impetuous,) was fond of Christmas revellings, as before mentioned; and New Year's day, or night, was frequently fixed on for some imposing pageant, according to the style of that age; of which one instance may be

* Clavis Calendaria, vol. i. p. 135.

selected from Hall's Chronicle in the Christmas of 1513-14. "And against Newieres night, was made in the halle a castle, gates, towers, and dungion, garnished wyth artilerie, and weapon after the most warlike fashion: and on the frount of the castle was written, *Le Fortresse dangerus*, and within the castle were vi ladies clothed in russet satin laide all ouer with leues of golde, and every owde knit with laces of blewe silke and golde. On their heddes, coyfes and cappes all of golde. After this castle had been caried about the hal, and the Quene had behelde it, in came the Kyng, with fiue other appareled in coates, the one halfe of russet satyn, spangled with spāgles of fine gold, the other halfe riche clothe of gold, on ther heddes cappes of russet satin, embroudered with workes of fine gold bulliō. These vi assaulted the castle; the ladies seyng them so lustie & coragious, were content to solace with them, and upon farther communicacion, to yeld the castle, and so thei came doune and daunced a long space. And after the ladies led the knightes into the castle, and then the castle sodoinly vanished out of their sightes."

At present the commencement of the year is treated as a feast, and frequently as a sort of meeting or *re-union* among families, where they can conveniently join at the same table; and in many cases the servants and labourers are entertained by their employers, and many of the Christmas sports repeated. Stewart mentions a singular custom in vogue in Strathdown, and its neighbourhood, formerly common to all the Highlands on this day. "Piles of juniper wood are collected and set on fire, each door, window, and crevice being first closely stopped up; the fumes and smoke of the burning wood cause to the inmates violent sneezing, coughing, &c. till they are nearly exhausted,

producing expectoration, and thereby, as they fancy, driving off disease; a cordial is afterwards administered around. The horses, cattle, and other bestial stock are treated in the same way."*

New year's gifts are not yet obsolete, although the practice is losing ground, which is a pity, as it served to strengthen and cement that kind feeling in society, which so many circumstances concur to jar and interrupt. It is now very much confined to interchange of gifts in families, at least in this country. For on the Continent the mutual exchange of presents, in the shape of jewellery, fancy articles, bon-bons, sweetmeats, &c. is very considerable: the expenditure in Paris alone for them *(étrennes*, as they are called, and hence *le jour d'étrennes)* has been reckoned at upwards of £20,000. Visits are made throughout the circle of a person's acquaintance, and the customary gifts left, which, if not intrinsically valuable, are at least fanciful and pretty. In Spain a similar custom formerly existed, tables being prepared in the house-squares, or entrance halls, for the reception of the visiting cards and presents.

According to Chardin, the Persians on this day exchange gilded eggs, painted and ornamented, a custom of great antiquity, the egg typifying the commencement of things, whence the mundane egg, so essential in much of the Oriental Mythology. In the Celtic countries the Druids presented misletoe to the people about the time of the new year, for which they no doubt obtained some good equivalent. Boulanger† says, "that the second day of the sigillaria (the four latter days of the Saturnalia) which fell on the 21st of December, was the fête of the goddess *Angeronia*, or *Ageronia*, the goddess of

* Popular Superstitions of the Highlanders, pp. 252-3.

† L'Antiquité devoilée, vol. iv. pp. 16-17.

silence or mysteries, sometimes called *Strenua*, then signifying courage. At this time of the feast the fear of the close of the world was supposed to cease, and people mutually gave presents, saying *strenue*, or courage; hence the word *étrennes*. The practice, like all others which could be traced at all to the Pagans, was forbidden by many councils, but, as in other cases, with no lasting effect. Amongst others, the Concilium Autisiodorense, A.D. 614, in France, decreed, that "It is not lawfull in the Kalends of January to make any bonefires or filthy playes; or to observe any diabolical New-Yeares gifts."*

The difference between New-year's gifts and Christmas boxes appears to be, that the former were mutually exchanged, or, indeed, were sometimes in the nature of an offering from an inferior to a superior, who made some acknowledgment in return, while the latter were in the nature of gratuities from superiors to their dependants. The practice is of considerable antiquity in this country, and formerly it was customary for the nobility and persons connected with the court to make presents to the King, who gave gifts generally of money or plate in return. The servants or officers who carried the gifts also had handsome fees or presents made them; and it became at last almost a matter of regulation what the amount of them was to be, depending on the rank of the person by whom they were sent, on which the rank of the messenger would also depend: as for instance, in the Northumberland household-book it appears, that his lordship used to give to the King's servant bringing a new-year's gift, if a special friend of his own, £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*; if only a servant of the King, £5.

* Prynne, Histrio-Mastix, p. 580.

To the Queen's servant £3. 6*s.* 8*d.* and to the servant (probably a domestic) bringing a gift from his son and heir, Lord Percy, only 12*d.* The noblemen also had similar customs in their own households.

An account has recently been published of New Year's Gifts, presented by Henry VI. in 1437,* taken from Cott. MS. Cleop. F. iv. fol. 108, consisting principally of articles of jewellery, of which one of the chief is the following:—" Fyrste, delivered by youre graciouse comaundem̃t and appointem̃t to send to Quene Kat̃ine for her yerisgifte on New-yeris day, she beyng at Bermondesey, j tabulett of golde with a crucifixe garnized with sapĥ and p̧t weyng aboute xiiij unc̃ of gold, and was bought of John Patteslee, goldesmyth, for the some of xl^{li}."

Henry VII. in 1495, as appears from his privy purse expences, gave away £120 in New-year's gifts. It must be recollected that he was an avaricious monarch; or this sum might have been given in rewards to those who brought him New-year's gifts.

In the accounts of the Duke of Richmond and Somerset, natural son of Henry VIII. in the 17th year of that monarch's reign, are the following entries connected with New-year's gifts.† " Item, paied for certayne newe yeres giftes, £6. 9*s.* 5*d.* Item, rewardes yeven to diverse parsons for newe yeres giftes presented unto the saied Duke upon newe-yeres daye last, £9. 6*s.* 8*d.*"

Among those presented to the Lady Mary in the 34th of Henry VIII. are a little chain, and a pair of hose wrought in gold and silk from the Princess Elizabeth; a gown of carnation satin of the Venice fashion, from my Lady Margaret; a wrought smock

* Excerpta Historica, London 1830, No. ii. p. 148–50.

† Collier's History, vol. i. p. 98, n.

from Lady Frances Dorset; a fair steel-glass from three Venetians; a hat from Dr. Augustine; and a pair of silver snuffers from Mr. Hobbs. Rewards in money to a considerable amount were given to the servants who brought them.*

In Nichols's "Progresses" and Nichols's "Illustrations of Manners and Expences," numerous instances are given of gifts to royal personages, especially to Queen Elizabeth, who expected valuable ones. They seem to have been much of the same description every year. The peers spiritual and temporal, ladies, gentlewomen, and officers of the household, &c. gave presents according to their rank and means, of money, rich dresses, jewels, &c.; the physicians and apothecary, boxes of ginger and candy; the cook and other domestics, or officers, similar gifts to those hereafter mentioned. A few examples will suffice, as Nichols can be resorted to for fuller information. In a list of them given to Queen Mary, 1st January, in the 4th year of her reign, the following occur:—

"By the Ladie *Elizabeth* her grace, the fore part of a kyrtell, and a peire of sleves of cloth of silv', richly enbraudered all ouer with Venice silver, and rayzed with silu' and blake silke.

"By the Duches of *Somerset*, a smoke, wrought all ou' with silke, and collor and ruffes of damaske golde, purle, and siluer.

"By the Lady *Yorke*, divers frutes, as 6 suger loues, sixe tapnetts of figges, foure barrelles of sucketts and oringe water, &c.

"By *Mrs. Levyna Terling*, a smale picture of the Trynite.

"By *Mrs. Preston*, a fatte goose and a capon.

"By *Gent*, two Gynny-cokks scalded.

* Ellis's Original Letters, vol. i. p. 272.

"By Mr. Mychaell Wentworth, two fat oxen.

"By *Smalwodde Crosser*, in a boxe, nutmeggs and gynger, and long stawlke of cinamon electe."

In 1561-2 Queen Elizabeth received several gifts of sums of money, from £40 by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Matthew Parker) in a red silk purse in demy sovereigns, to £4 by the Lady Cheeke, in a russett silk purse. Also a great number of articles of dress, most of them richly wrought; and miscellaneous presents of various value, from handsome pieces of jewellery, to one pye of quinces, by *John Betts*, "servaunte of the Pastrye." The total amount of the money given, is £1262. 11*s.* 8*d.* In return for these presents, the Queen gave presents of plate gilt. *John Betts* received "twoo guilt spoones."

In 1577–8, amongst others of various descriptions, are the following: the smocks so often mentioned, were not precisely the same article of dress as that now so called.

"By Sir *Gawen Carewe*, a smock of camerick, wrought with black silke in the collor and sleves, the square and ruffs wrought with Venice golde, and edged with a small bone lace of Venice golde." Also,

"By *Phillip Sydney*, a smock of camerick, the sleves and collor wrought with blac worke, and edged with a small bone lace of golde and silver; and a sute of ruffs cutworke, floreshed with golde and silver, and set with spangills, containing 4 oz.

"By Doctor *Maister*, a pot of grene gynger, and other of orenge flowers.

"By *Smythsonne*, Master Cooke, a feyer marchpane.

"By *Dudley*, Sergeant of the Pastry, a greate pye of quynses and wardyns guilte.

"By *Christofer Gyles*, a Cutler, a meate knyf with a feyer hafte of white bone; a conceyte in it.

"By *Morgan*, Apotticary, thre boxes, one of gynger candy, another of grene gynger, and the thirde orenge candit.

"By *Smyth*, Dustman, two boltes of cameryck.

All persons who made her these gifts, had in general gifts in "guilte plate" of different value in return.

In 1578-9 is the following:—"By *Morrys Watkins*, eighteen larkes in a cage:" in reward for these Watkins had 20*s*.

In 1581-2, "Item, a juell of golde, being a catt, and myce playing with her, garnished with smale dyamondes and perle. Geven by the Lady *Howarde*.

"Item, a flower of golde, garnished with sparcks of diamonds, rubyes, and ophales, with an agathe of her Majestis phisnamy, and a perle pendante, with devices painted in it. Geven by *Eight Maskers* in Christmas-weeke."

I have understood that the practice was continued up to the time of George III.; and Brand mentions that in his time the nobility used to send the King a purse with gold in it. And until these few years past there was a remnant left, in a custom of putting a crown-piece under the plates of the chaplains in waiting at dinner; but the crown-pieces have latterly gone after the plum-porridge.

Formerly, tenants used to make presents at this time to their landlords, frequently a capon, or something of similar value, and the custom still partially exists. Richard Evelyn, Esq. High Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in 1634, held a splendid Christmas at his mansion at Wotton, having a regular Lord of Misrule for the occasion; and it appears it was then the custom for the neighbours to send

presents of eatables to provide for the great consumption consequent upon such entertainments; the following is a list of those sent on this occasion: two sides of venison, two half brawns, three pigs, ninety capons, five geese, six turkeys, four rabbits, eight partridges, two pullets, five sugar loaves, half a pound of nutmegs, one basket of apples and eggs, three baskets of apples, two baskets of pears.*

Suitors also presented gifts to the Chancellor, for the purpose of influencing his judgment. Sir Thomas More always returned these, and it is related of him, that being presented by "one *Mrs.* Goaker" with a pair of gloves and forty pounds of angels put into them, he said to her, "Mistresse, since it were against good manners to refuse your New-year's gift, I am content to take your gloves, but as for the *lining* I utterly refuse it."†

The officers of his court also gave New-year's gifts to the Chancellor; and the first judge that distinguished himself by refusing them was Lord Cowper, who came into office in 1705.‡ The Marshal of the King's Bench likewise formerly presented the judges with a piece of plate as a New-year's gift. Sir Matthew Hale wished to decline it, but finding such a precedent might injure his successors, he received the value of it in money, and applied it to the relief of the poor prisoners.

The Epiphany, or Twelfth-day, is a feast of very high antiquity. During the Saturnalia a king was elected, who was invested with full power over the assembled guests, and the custom of electing a Twelfth-day king may have been modified from this, although the office of Lord of Misrule appears

* Archæologia, vol. xviii. p. 335.

† Roper's Life of Sir T. More, p. 73.

‡ Parkes's History of the Court of Chancery, p. 290.

also to be similar. The various customs on this day are to commemorate the manifestation of our Saviour to the Gentiles, and have numerous references to the Magi, Wise Men of the East, or Three Kings as they are commonly called. According to Picart,* the feast was established in the church in the 4th century. It was an early usage to elect a King, though he does not appear among the revels of the old English court or nobility, not being mentioned in the accounts we have of them, or distinguished from the Lord of Misrule. It was not necessary that he should be chosen by lot (although most customary), for Brand says that in France, up to the end of last century, when the revolution destroyed for a time every thing of the sort, and when "La fête de Rois" was by order of the council transformed into "La fête de Sans-culottes," it was the custom at the court to choose one of the courtiers for King, who was waited on by the other nobles. In Germany also the students and citizens in the various cities and universities used to choose one of their companions for King.

The custom however to decide on a King by lot, usually a bean, whence he was called King of the Bean, is of considerable antiquity. In "Les Crieries de Paris," composed by Guillaume de Villeneuve in the end of the 13th century,† is this line: "Gastel à feve orroiz crier," which a note describes as "gateaux pour le jour de la fête des Rois," evidently alluding to the bean which marked the fortunate possessor as king. The method was to inclose a bean in the cake, as is still the case in French twelfth-cakes, and divide it into portions, when, as before mentioned, the bean denoted the royal personage. The King or Queen thus elected chose his

* Religious Ceremonies, London 1731, fol. vol. ii. p. 6.

† Fabliaux et Contes, par Barbazan et Meon, vol. ii. 285.

or her consort, and in subsequent times appointed officers of their household; and in France when the King or Queen drank, the company, on pain of forfeit, were to exclaim *le Roi* ou *la Reine boit.*

There was a King of the Bean in the time of Edward the Third; as in an account of the eighth year of his reign it appears that sixty shillings were given upon the day of the Epiphany to Regan the trumpeter and his associates, the court minstrels, in the name of the King of the Bean, (in nomine Regis de Fabâ.) *

In some countries a coin was inserted instead of a bean, and portions of the cake were assigned to our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and the three Kings, which were given to the poor, and if the bean should happen to be in any of those portions the King was then chosen by pulling straws.

The ingredients of the bean-cake, about two hundred years ago, were flour, honey, ginger, and pepper: what they are at present, Monsieur Jarrin can inform us, as his shop abounds with them on this feast. They cannot however compete with that beautiful frosted, festooned, bedizened, and ornamented piece of confectionery called, *par eminence,* Twelfth-cake, with its splendid waxen or plaster of Paris kings and queens, the delight and admiration of school-boys and girls. Besides the bean, a pea was sometimes put in for the queen, a custom which is referred to in Herrick's song for Twelfth-day, printed in the subsequent collection. Baby-cake, in Ben Jonson's Masque of "Christmas," is attended by "an usher bearing a great cake with a bean and a pease."

Henry Teonge, who has been before quoted, gives a quaint description of Twelfth-day on board

* Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, Hone's ed. 8vo. p. 344.

ship.*—" January 6, 1676. Very ruff weather all the last night, and all this day. Wee are now past Zante: had wee beene there this day, wee had seene a greate solemnity; for this day being 12 day, the Greeke Bishop of Zante doth (as they call it) baptise the sea, with a great deale of ceremony; sprinkling their gallys and fishing-tackle with holy water. But wee had much myrth on board, for wee had a greate kake made, in which was put a beane for the king, a pease for the queen, a cloave for the knave, a forked stick for the coockold, a ragg for the slutt. The kake was cutt into severall peices in the great cabin, and all put into a napkin, out of which every on took his peice, as out of a lottery; then each peice is broaken to see what was in it, which caused much laughter, to see our leiuetenant prove the coockold, and more to see us tumble on over the other in the cabin, by reason of the ruff weather."

The custom at present is to draw from a bowl tickets, or painted characters, including among them a king and queen, the remainder being according to the genius of the composer, and generally not displaying much fancy or taste, but containing some caco-logy of the fictitious character, as

Sir Habakkuk Hzsty.

It is not *right* I should be *left* the last,
You cut so *slow*, you make your guests all *fast*.

Jack Robinson.

Safely returned from perils of the C's,
Myself and comrades come as brisk as B's,
Like gentlemen to live at home at E's,
To drink your T, your great Twelfth-cake to T's.

In the course of last century, the tickets represented the ministers, maids of honour, and other

* Diary, p. 130-1.

attendants of the king and queen. A better way perhaps would be to elect a king and queen, and let the officers and ladies of the court then be appointed according to the genius of the parties, as the characters should be supported throughout the evening; we should not then have such anomalies, as a gouty harlequin, or a Miss Hoyden of seventy, or the mother of thirteen children as Fanny Flirt.

At the time that disguisings and pageants were in vogue at court during Christmas, Twelfth-day was frequently chosen for the performance of some of the most splendid.

In one of the Fairfax MSS. entitled "The booke of all maner of Orders concernynge an Erles hous," &c. part of which is dated 16th Henry VII. though the handwriting appears of the latter end of Henry the Eighth, is an account of the mode of regulating "a disguising," both by men and women, on Twelfth-night.*

Le Neve's MS. called "The Royal Book," containing the method of keeping festivals at court in the reign of Henry the Seventh, prescribes "That on Twelfth-day the King must go crowned, in his royal robes, kirtle, surcoat, his furred hood about his neck, his mantle with a long train, and his cutlas before him; his armills upon his arms, of gold set full of rich stones; and no temporal man to touch it, but the King himself; and the squire for the body must bring it to the King in a fair kerchief, and the King must put them on himself; and he must have his sceptre in his right hand, and the ball with the cross in the left hand, and the crown upon his head. And he must offer that day, gold, myrrh, and sense; then must the dean of the chapel send unto the Archbishop of Canterbury,

* Collier's History of Dramatic Poetry, vol. i. p. xvii.

by clerk or priest, the King's offering that day; and then must the Archbishop give the next benefice that falleth in his gift to the same messenger."

Henry the Eighth, during many successive years of his reign, indulged in gorgeous spectacles on this day, of which Hall's Chronicle shall supply us with one or two examples. In the 2nd year of his reign "Agaynst the xii. daye or the daie of the Epiphanie at nyghte, before the banket in the hall at Rychemond, was a pageaunt deuised lyke a mountayne, glisteryng by nyght, as though it had bene all of golde and set with stones, on the top of the whiche mountayne was a tree of golde the braunches and bowes frysed with gold, spreding on euery side ouer the mountayne, with roses and pomegranettes, the whiche mountayn was with vices brought vp towardes the Kyng, and out of the same came a ladye, appareiled in clothe of golde, and the children of honour called the Henchemen, whiche were freshly disguysed, and daunced a morice before the Kyng. And that done, reentred the mountayne; and then it was drawen backe; and then was the wassaill or banket brought in, and so brake up Christmas."

From the next example it appears that masks were then but recently introduced into this country. "On the daie of the Epiphanie at night (in his third year), the Kyng with a xi. other wer disguised after the maner of Italie, called a maske, a thyng not seen afore in Englande; thei were appareled in garmentes long and brode, wrought all with gold, with visers and cappes of gold; and after the banket doen, these Maskers came in, with sixe gentlemen disguised in silke, bearyng staffe torches, and desired the ladies to daunce; some were content, and some that knewe the fashion of it refused, because it was not a thyng commonly

seen. And after thei daunced and commoned together as the fashion of the maskes is, thei tooke their leaue and departed, and so did the Quene and all the ladies."

During the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, and indeed up to the time of the civil wars, this feast was observed with great show at Court, as well as at the Universities and the Inns of Court. Several plays, including many of the masques of Ben Jonson, were from time to time presented at Court on, and frequently purposely written for this occasion. In the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, January 1559-60, Nichols, in his "Progresses," mentions that on "Twelfth-day, in the afternoon, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and all the crafts of London, and the Bachelors of the Mayor's Company, went in procession to St. Paul's, after the old custom, and there did hear a sermon. The same day was a scaffold set up in the hall for a play; and after the play was over, was a fine mask; and after, a great banquet that lasted till midnight."

It was a very early practice with our Kings to make an offering at the high altar on this day, of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, in commemoration of the offering of the three kings. Edward the First, in his 28th year, gave to the amount of one florin in gold, with frankincense and myrrh, besides oblations in money to the amount of 22*s.** Henry the Seventh made offerings to the value of £1. 13*s.* 4*d.*† The practice has been continued to the present day. The same usage also prevailed on the Continent, but the customs there have been frequently varied by the numerous political changes of late years. The King of Spain formerly offered three chalices or communion cups, worth about three hundred ducats

* Wardrobe Account, published by Antiq. Society, p. 27.

† Excerpta Historica, part i. p. 106.

each. In one of them was placed a piece of gold, in the second incense, and in the third myrrh.

The legend of the three kings is supposed to have been taken from the 10th verse of the 72nd Psalm, a psalm wherein Solomon's reign is considered as a type of Christ's.—"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Saba shall offer gifts;" or, as the Bee Hive of the Romish Church* states it, "Kings shall come out of the Moore's land to worshippe Christ."

Oliver, "On Initiation," (p. 92–3.) citing Hyde, "Rel. vet. Pers." states, that "the initiated in the religious mysteries of Persia are said to have had communicated to them as the last great secret, the important prophecy of Zeradusht, or Zoroaster, with which his early instruction under Daniel had acquainted him, that in future times a prophet should appear, the son of a pure virgin, whose advent should be proclaimed by a brilliant star shining with celestial brightness at noon-day. The candidates were enjoined to follow this star, if it should appear in their time, until they found the new-born babe, to whom they were to offer rich gifts, and prostrate themselves as to the Creator."

Without, however, entering into the authenticity of this prophecy, it has been supposed that the celebrated prophecy of Balaam† made a deep impression on the surrounding nations, and being handed down through successive generations, prepared the way for the appearance of the star which

* London, 1623, 8vo. p. 198.

† "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."—*Numbers*, xxiv. 17, *and see note on the subject in Townsend's Arrangement of the Old Testament.*

proclaimed to the Gentiles the birth of our Saviour. At the time of its appearance also there was a general expectation that the fulfilment of the prophecy respecting the birth of Christ was at hand. But this is matter of too serious a nature to be discussed in a work of the present description, which must treat of the traditionary history only of the three kings; and if some of my readers may surmise that part of it has the appearance of fable, in good sooth I cannot vouch for its veracity. It is as I found it.

The Venerable Bede, in the 7th century, is the first writer in this country who gives a particular description of them, which he probably took from some earlier tradition. Melchior, the first, was old, and had grey hair, with a long beard; he offered gold to Christ, in acknowledgment of his sovereignty. Gaspar, or Jasper, who was young and had no beard, offered frankincense, in recognition of the divinity of our Lord. Balthazar, the third, was of a dark or black complexion, as a Moor, with a large spreading beard, and offered myrrh to our Saviour's humanity; according to these lines in "Festa Anglo-Romana," p. 7.

Tres Reges Regi Regum, tria dona ferebant;
Myrrham Homini, Uncto aurum, thura dedere Deo.

Or, as Sandys gives them,

Three kings, the King of Kings, three gifts did bring;
Myrrh, incense, gold, as to Man, God, a King.
Three holy gifts be likewise given by thee
To Christ, even such as acceptable be.
For myrrha tears; for frankincense, impart
Submissive prayers; for pure gold, a pure heart.*

Bede also describes their dresses, &c.; and in numerous old pictures and popular representations,

* Sandys's Travels, p. 141.

for which the offering of the Wise Men has been a favourite subject, his account is followed. They had other names besides the above; as the "Golden Legend" says, their names in Hebrew were Appellys, Ameryus, and Damascus,—and in Greek, Galagalath, Magalath, and Tharath; the Greek and Hebrew, however, appear to be transposed. Hone* mentions three other names, Ator, Sator, and Peratoras. There are several old manuscripts relating to their history in the British Museum, from which much of the following particulars is taken.†

In the course of their journey, which lasted for twelve days, they neither took nor required rest or refreshment; it seemed to them indeed as one day. The nearer they approached to Christ's dwelling, the brighter the star shone. Melchior, the King of Nubia and Arabia, was of low stature; he gave a "rounde apple of gold and thirty gilt (*i. e.* golden) pens." Baltazar, King of Godolie (or Sodalia) and Saba (or Sheba), was of mean (*i. e.* middle) stature, and offered incense. Jasper, King of Tarse and Egypt (or the Isle of Egristula), was a black Ethiop (and not Balthazar as mentioned by Bede), and presented myrrh.

The star was said to be as an eagle flying and beating the air with his wings, and had within it the form and likeness of a young child, and above him the sign of a cross. In "Dives and Pauper" ‡ is the following account of it:—"*Dives.* What manner sterre was it than? *Pauper.* Some clerkes tellen that it was an angell in the lykenesse of a sterre, for the kynges hadde noo knowynge of angellys, but toke all hede to the sterre. Some

* Every-Day Book, vol. i. p. 46.

† MSS. Bibl. Reg. 5 F. xiv. 7. Ibid. 18 A. x. 8. Harl. MSS. 1704, 11.

‡ Ed. W. de Worde, 1496, ciiii.

saye that it was the same childe that lay in the oxe stalle whiche appered to the kynges in the lykenesse of a sterre, and soo drewe theym and ledde theym soo to hym selfe in Bethleem. And therefore holy chirche syngeth and sayth, Jacebat in presepio et fulgebat in celo, he laye full lowe in the cratche and he shone full bryght aboue in heuen. But the comon sentence of the clerkes is, that it was a new sterre newely ordeyned of God to shewe the byrthe of Cryste. And anone as it had done the offyce that it was ordeyned for it tourned ayen to the mater that it come fro."

The history of the thirty pence, or pieces of gold, is curious, and shews the ingenuity with which some of these legends were dovetailed together. They were first coined by Terah, the father of Abraham, and taken by the latter with him when he left the land of the Chaldees. He afterwards paid them away to Ephron, with the purchase money for the field and cave of Machpelah. The Ismaelites then, according to one account, paid them back as the price of Joseph when sold by his brethren; but we may imagine them to have been returned for some other purpose, if we choose, as the money paid for Joseph was only twenty pieces, according to the usual version of the Scriptures. There is an old poem, however, by Adam Davie, who wrote about the year 1312, wherein it is said,

> Ffor thritti pens thei sold that childe,
> The seller highth Judas,
> Iþo Ruben com him and myssed him
> Ffor ynow he was.*

However, the money was afterwards paid to Joseph by his brethren for corn during the scar-

* Warton's History of Poetry, 8vo. ii. 51.

city. On the death of Jacob, Joseph paid them away to the royal treasury of Sheba, for spices to embalm him. The celebrated Queen of Sheba, in after times, gave them to King Solomon with many other presents. In the time of Rehoboam, when the temple was spoiled by the King of Egypt, the King of Arabia accompanied him, and received these pieces of money in his share of the plunder. In this kingdom they remained until the time of Melchior, who, as we have before seen, offered them to our Saviour.

Their history after the presentation to Christ, is not less singular. On the flight into Egypt, they were lost by the Virgin Mary, and found by a shepherd, who preserved them for many years, when, being afflicted by some disease incurable by mortal aid alone, he applied to our Saviour, who healed him, and he then made his oblation at the altar of these thirty pence. They were subsequently paid by the priests to Judas in reward for his perfidy, and when he, smitten with remorse, returned them and hung himself, the chief priests applied fifteen of them for the purchase of the potter's field, and with the remaining fifteen they bribed the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre to say that the disciples came by night and stole the body of our Saviour. After this they were dispersed, and all traces of them lost. They were made of the purest gold, the term pieces of silver made use of in some parts of the Scripture in reference to them, being merely a common or generic name for money, as the word *argent* is now sometimes used in France. On one side was a king's head crowned, and on the other some unintelligible Chaldaic characters; they were said to have been of the value of three florins each.

The three kings were baptized in their old age

by St. Thomas, and on their deaths their bodies were taken to Constantinople by the Empress Helena, from thence they were subsequently removed to Milan, and afterwards carried to Cologne in the time of Reinaldus, Archbishop of that place, whence they are commonly called the Three Kings of Cologne. Their virtues did not end with their lives, as their bones were supposed to possess valuable healing properties. Their names written on parchment and hung about the patient's neck, were considered to be preservatives from the falling sickness and madness: a simple remedy, but requiring much faith to be mixed with it.

The following charm was found in the purse of Jackson, a celebrated smuggler, convicted of murder in 1749: in his case it however did not prove effectual; as he died struck with horror just after being measured for his irons—

" Sancti Tres Reges
Gaspar, Melchior, Belthazar,
Orate pro nobis, nunc et in hora
Mortis nostræ.

" Ces billets ont touché aux trois têtes de S. S. Rois à Cologne.

" Ils sont pour des voyageurs, contre les malheurs de chemins, maux de tête, mal caduque, fièvres, sacellerie, toute sorte de malefice, et mort subite."

They were also made use of as terms of adjuration. Diccon, in " Gammer Gurton's Needle," swears by the " Three Kings of Kullain."

One John Aprilius, when he was hanged, implored their assistance; and in consequence, when he was cut down, after having been suspended for three days, he was found to be yet alive. He thereupon went to Cologne half naked, with his halter about his neck, to return thanks.*

* Hone's Every Day Book, vol. i. p. 46.

There is a story of Roprecht the robber somewhere, where the hero is also hung for certain peccadilloes, but his body disappears miraculously from the gibbet, whether by good or evil agency is doubtful; however in no long time he suddenly appears again ready hung, but with the addition of a pair of boots and spurs. As he is now very dead, the reason of his freaks remains a mystery to his countrymen, but the readers of the tale are informed in confidence by the author, that this same Roprecht is taken down from the gibbet by some passer by, who finds him still living, whether by aid of the Three Kings or otherwise does not appear, and maintains him for some time; but he returns to his old tricks, and takes off his benefactor's horse; he is however pursued, and after some trouble replaced in the halter which he so well deserved, and this time the noose is effectually fastened.

Their history was a favourite subject for paintings and tapestry from an early period. Warton (vol. iii. p. 11.) mentions some at the convent of St. Swithin, at Winchester, in 1374; and Henry the Fifth had a piece with the same subject: many other instances might be given.

The early mysteries, as might be expected, frequently adopted so popular a legend, and some of the most recent continental ones have preserved it; it was also introduced into a puppet-show at Bartholomew Fair, in the time of Queen Anne, as before stated. Lebeuf mentions a Latin mystery of the Three Kings so early as the time of Henry the First of France in the 11th century, wherein Virgil is introduced accompanying them; and at the end of the adoration, he joins with them in singing a long *Benedicamus*.* The first feast of the Three Kings was celebrated at Milan, in 1336,

* Warton's Hist. of Poetry, vol. ii. p. 68-9. n.

by the convent of the friars preachers. Warton* gives the following account. It is called in the ritual, The Feast of the Star.

"The three kings appeared crowned on three great horses, richly habited, surrounded by pages, body-guards, and an innumerable retinue. A golden star was exhibited in the sky, going before them. They proceeded to the pillars of S. Lawrence, where king Herod was represented with his scribes and wise-men. The three kings ask Herod where Christ should be born: and his wise-men having consulted their books, answer him at Bethlehem. On which, the three kings with their golden crowns, having in their hands golden cups filled with frankincense, myrrh, and gold, the star still going before, marched to the church of S. Eustorgius, with all their attendants; preceded by trumpets and horns, apes, baboons, and a great variety of animals. In the church, on one side of the high altar, there was a manger with an ox and an ass, and in it the infant Christ in the arms of his mother. Here the three kings offer their gifts," &c.

When Henry the Sixth entered Paris, in 1431, as King of France, he was met at the gate of St. Denis, by a dumb show, representing the birth of the Virgin Mary and her marriage, the adoration of the three kings, and the parable of the sower.† This legend afforded the subject of one of the Corpus Christi plays at Newcastle, of which many particulars are preserved in Brand's History of that place. The earliest notice of them by him is in 1426, but they are considered of older date. Each company acted its own play. The glaziers, with plumbers, pewterers, and painters, and anciently consisting of goldsmiths, plumbers, glaziers,

* Warton's Hist. of Poetry, vol. ii. p. 128. n.

† Ibid. ii. 71. n.

pewterers, and painters, maintained their play of "The Three Kings of Coleyn," as appears by an order of their Society, dated Sept. 1st, 1536. In an old book of this company, is the following entry, dated 5th March 1598, relating to the players' apparel.

"Bye beards to the kynges three, and for the messonger one with theyr head hayres.

"Item, three cappes, and thre septers, and thre crownes.

"Item, one sterre and twey crownes.

"Item, box with our ordenarie and oure playe book."

About the beginning of James the First, these plays were suppressed in all towns of the kingdom.*

In an inventory of ornaments belonging to the church of Holbech, in Lincolnshire, in 1548, appears, "Item, for the coats of the iii kyngs of Coloyne, *vs.* iiii*d.*" evidently intended for some mystery or procession.† Some of the earliest printed books were appropriated to their history, so popular does it appear to have been. Dibdin‡ says that an edition was printed in his best manner by Güldenschaiff, in 1477; and W. de Worde, in 1521, also printed one. There are numerous manuscripts on the subject; amongst others, Harl. MS. 2407-13, containing an antient song on the Three Kings of Cologne, wherein the whole story is resolved into alchemy!

Twelfth-day is now considered the close of Christmas, after which people go back to their accustomed labours, treasuring up the recollection of past enjoyments, and looking forward to a repetition of them on the return of the season. But in

* Brand's History of Newcastle, ii. 372. n.

† Warton's Hist. of Poetry, iii. 11. n.

‡ Biographical Tour, vol. i. p. 177.

former times the revels were frequently extended to a later day. In Herrick's time the 7th of January, St. Distaff's-day, as he calls it, was considered the last day, it being thought judicious probably to allow a kind of idle day to intervene between the sports of Twelfth-day and the full return of labour, for he says,

> Partly work and partly play
> Ye must on S. Distaff's-day;
>
> * * * * *
>
> Give S. Distaffe all the right,
> Then bid Christmas sport good night;
> And next morrow, every one
> To his own vocation.†

All semblance of Christmas, however, was not finally discarded until the 2nd of February, Candlemas-day, or the Purification of the Virgin; and at present the evergreens in churches are frequently kept up until Lent. According to Herrick, the evergreens should be taken down in houses on Candlemas-day—

> Down with the rosemary, and so
> Down with the baies and misletoe;
> Down with the holly, ivie, all
> Wherewith ye drest the Christmas hall;
> That so the superstitious find
> No one least branch there left behind;
> For look, how many leaves there be
> Neglected there, maids, trust to me,
> So many goblins you shall see.‡

It was also the custom to burn the Christmas log for this day, taking care to preserve a fragment to kindle the log of the following Christmas.

> Kindle the Christmas brand, and then
> Till sunne-set let it burne;
> Which quencht, then lay it up agen,
> Till Christmas next returne.

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† Herrick's Works, vol. ii. pp. 168–9. ‡ Ibid. pp. 152–3.

Part must be kept, wherewith to teend
The Christmas log next yeare;
And where 'tis safely kept, the fiend
Can do no mischiefe there.*

He adds,

End now the white-loafe and the pye,
And let all sports with Christmas dye.

The Lords of Mis-rule, or Christmas Princes, frequently had their power extended to this day, when after a cessation from revelling, or nearly so, since Twelfth day, a sort of farewell was given, and then the last lingering relic of the Christmas was passed away.

This Lord of Misrule, or comptroller of the revels, by whatever name he was called, was of considerable antiquity; Faber says he was derived from an old Persico-gothic festival in honour of Budha; during the Saturnalia also a king or ruler of the feast was chosen. Some have deduced this office from the Boy-Bishop, of whom traces may be discovered as far back as the Constantinopolitan synod in 867. This ceremony prevailed in England from an early period; and when Edward the First went to Scotland in 1299, one of these boy-bishops was permitted to sing vespers before him in his chapel at Heton, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and received a present of 40*s*. in consequence. The custom was put down by Henry the Eighth, in 1542. It was revived during the short and troubled reign of Queen Mary, but again put aside upon the accession of Elizabeth.

The Lord of Misrule, or Christmas Prince (called in Scotland the Abbot of Unreason,† and in France the Abbé de Malgouverné and Abbé de Liesse,)

* Herrick's Works, vol. ii. p. 124.

† Suppressed by Parliament in 1555.

was not only appointed to control or superintend the festivities at court, where his power was probably restrained by the royal prerogative, but also at the houses of the nobility, the different colleges, and the inns of court. In the 7th of Henry VII. in the household-book of that monarch, is a payment to "Ringley, Abbot of Misrule, £5." In the 10th year, to the same person £2; and in the 18th year, to the Abbot of Mysrule, in rewarde, £6. 13*s.* 4*d.*; in the 22nd and 23rd years, to the same character, for his besynes in Crestenmas holydays, £6. 13*s.* 4*d.** The establishment and equipment of this officer were frequently of a very expensive description. In 1551, when Mr. Ferrers, as before-mentioned, was Lord of Misrule, his expences were more than £650, his apparel alone amounting to a third; he had different dresses for Christmas-day, New Year's day, and Twelfth-day. That on New Year's-day was a robe of red bawdekyn, nine yards, with a great embroidered gard of purple silver, fourteen yards; a coat of the same materials, and embroidered and garded in like manner; a pair of hosen slopwise, the breeches of cloth of gold, figured with velvett red and green, with a cut gard of cloth of gold on it; a pair of buskins of red bawdekyn. The cost £34. 14*s.*†

Grafton, in his description of this Christmas, states it to be of old ordinary course; that there is always one appointed to make sport in the court, called commonly Lord of Misrule, whose office was not unknown to such as had been brought up in noblemen's houses, and among great housekeepers, which used liberal feasting in that season.

The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs also formerly had their Lord of Misrule, as mentioned by Stow, but

* Collier's History, &c. vol. i. p. 44, n.

† Archæologia, vol. xviii. p. 320.

the office has of late years been discontinued. It is true there was an ordinance of Common Council in the 1st and 2nd of Mary for retrenching expences, whereby, amongst other things, it was directed, that the Lord Mayor or Sheriffs should not keep any Lord of Misrule in any of their houses.*

Stubbs, in his "Anatomie of Abuses," printed in 1595, reprobates the conduct of a sort of parish or country Lord of Misrule, with his hobby-horses, dragons, and riotous followers decorated with scarfs, ribbons, and laces, hung over with gold rings, precious stones, and other jewels, with bells about their legs and rich handkerchiefs in their hands: they carried their licence so far as to dance into the churches even during the time of service. These rude revellers, however, partook more of the nature of morris-dancers than of the Christmas Prince. His reign was interrupted by the progress of Puritanism, though, as before stated, there were some celebrated exhibitions of this description even as late as the seventeenth century.

In the Christmas at the Middle Temple in 1632, the Lord of Misrule was attended by his Lord Keeper, Lord Treasurer, eight white staves, a band of pensioners with their captain, and two chaplains, with other officers. His venison was supplied by Lord Holland, his Justice in Eyre, and the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London furnished his wine. Evelyn says that he was invited to the solemn foolery of *the Prince de la Grange*, at Lincoln's Inn, in January 1662, when the King and Duke of York, &c. were present; and in January 1668, he went to see the revels at the Middle Temple, which was an old but riotous custom.

The Society of Lincoln's Inn used to choose a

* Archæologia, vol. xviii. p. 314.

King of Christmas-day, and on Childermass-day another officer called the King of the Cockneys. The practice is now obsolete, unless the Twelfth-night king may be considered as similar for his limited time, and except in those very rare cases where in private parties it is agreed to choose one on any particular occasion during the holidays.

The custom of Christmas-boxes would be more honoured in the breach than the observance, taking into consideration the little sympathy that now exists between the boxers and the boxed. Notwithstanding, it is an old custom. Some have derived it from the practice of the monks, to offer masses for the safety of all vessels that went long voyages, in each of which a box was kept in the custody or under the control of the priest. Money, or other valuable consideration, was placed in these to secure the prayers of the church, and they were opened yearly at Christmas, whence they were called Christmas-boxes, and the name was readily transferred to the gifts themselves. Poor persons interested in the fate of these ships, begged money from their wealthier neighbours to enable them to contribute to these boxes.* The practice is, however, probably of pagan origin, like that of New-year's gifts, but differs at present, inasmuch as Christmas-boxes are seldom reciprocal, New-year's gifts frequently are; and the former are generally given to dependants. Apprentices and journeymen, and servants, used to carry about earthen boxes with a slit in them to receive money, and when the time for collecting was over, broke them to obtain the contents. Similar boxes may yet be seen, but principally made of wood. There are many examples of payments to domestics or other

* Brady, Clavis Calendaria, vol. ii. pp. 316–17.

dependants, somewhat in the nature of Christmas-boxes, in many of the old household accounts.

The oddest effect produced by the fear of Christmas-boxes was one that occurred some few years since, where a person in trade directed that he should be denied to all applicants for these forced gratuities. Amongst others, however, some importunate creditor called, and was denied. He immediately in the height of his wrath consulted his lawyer, or professional man, as is the modern term, and the unsuspecting victim of Christmas-box-phobia was punished by having a docket struck against him, and in due time may have appeared in the Gazette as "dealer and chapman," but I forget the result.

The dustmen and scavengers are in the habit of leaving printed applications for their Christmas-boxes, one of which, in my possession, warns people against a number of persons completely unconnected with "our profession, who go about at this season with the base design of imposing upon you, and defrauding your obedient humble servants." Another ticket of the "constant dustmen," as they call themselves, adds at the bottom, "No connexion with the scavengers." The Principal Wait also leaves a notice of a more imposing description, stating a regular appointment to the office by warrant, and admission with all the ancient forms of the City and Liberty of Westminster, and bears a silver-badge and chain with the arms of that city. But these ancient personages must be mentioned more at length.

In the early ages (but subsequent to those times when the bard was also the historian or chronicler, and held a high rank in the royal establishment,) minstrels, mimics, jugglers, tumblers, &c. crowded the abodes of our princes and grandees during the

several great festivals; at Christmas, therefore, as an especial feast, there was a numerous gathering of them. Many, particularly those who attained any eminence in their art, were attached to the establishment of royal and noble households. The term Wait, or Wayte, seems to designate a species of minstrel or musician, who kept watch at night during certain times of the year, having a pipe, or hautboy, or some similar instrument; on which he was to pipe watch as it was called, and to make *bon gayte,* that is, *bon guet,* at the different chamber doors.

In the household of Edward the Third, among the "mynstrells," were "waytes 3," who had 12*d.* per day in time of war. In time of peace, it appears they had only 20*s.* a year. The band of this monarch consisted of "five trumpeters, one cyteler, five pipers, one tabret, one mabrer, two clarions, one fidler, three wayghts or hautbois."*

Waits are mentioned in the ordinances for subsequent royal households, and the names of the individuals occasionally occur; but the description of one in the time of Edward the Fourth fully describes his office, station, and perquisites.

"A wayte, that nightelye from Mychelmas to Shreve Thorsdaye pipethe watche within this courte fower tymes; in the somere nightes iij tymes, and makethe bon gayte at every chambere doare and offyce, as well for feare of pyckeres and pilleres. He eateth in the halle with mynstrielles, and takethe lyverey at nighte a loffe, a galone of alle, and for somere nightes ij candles pich, a bushel of coles; and for wintere nights half a loaf of bread, a galon of ale, iiij candles piche, a bushel coles; daylye whilste he is presente in courte for

* Henry's Hist. of England, vol. viii. pp. 314-15.

his wages in cheque roale allowed iiij*d.* ob. or else iij*d.* by the discresshon of the steuarde and tressorere, and that, aftere his cominge and diseruinge: also cloathinge with the houshold yeomen or mynstrelles like to the wages that he takethe; and he be syke he taketh twoe loves, ij messe of greate meate, one gallon ale. Also he partethe with the housholde of general gyfts, and hathe his beddinge carried by the comptrollers assygment; and under this yeoman to be a groome watere. Yf he can excuse the yeoman in his absence, that he taketh rewarde, clotheinge, meat, and all other things lyke to other grooms of houshold. Also this yeoman-waighte, at the making of Knightes of the Bathe, for his attendance upon them by nighte-tyme, in watching in the chappelle, hath to his fee all the watchinge-clothing that the knight shall wear uppon him."*

As the encouragement given to minstrels at great houses lessened, so did their respectability, or relative station in society; besides which, their wandering propensities tended to promote irregular habits. In Henry the Fourth's time it was found necessary to lay a restraint on their proceedings; and in the fourth year of his reign an act was passed for that purpose, though it is confined to Wales, which was probably a favourite place of resort. The act was altered in 26th and 27th of Henry VIII. and here follows in its original classical language.

"Item, pur eschuir pluseurs diseases & meschiefs qont advenuz devaunt ces heures en la terre de Gales par pluseurs westours rymours ministralx & autres vacabondes ordeignez est & establiz qe nul

* Burney's History of Music, vol. ii. pp. 431-2, citing Liber Niger Domus Regis.

westour rymour ministrall ne vacabond soit aucunement sustenuz en la terre de Gales pur faire kymorthas ou coillage sur la commune people illoeqes."

There is a celebrated description of a minstrel, given by Laneham, in quaint uncouth language, in his Letter respecting the Queen's Entertainment at Killingworth (quasi Kenilworth) in 1575, and inserted by Nichols in his "Progresses." Like the waits, he wore "a fayr flagon cheyn, pewter (for sylver); az a Squier Minstrel of Middilsex, that travaild the cuntree thys soomer season unto fairz, and worshipfull menz houzez. From hiz cheyn hoong a schoochion, with metall and cooller resplandant upon his breast, of the auncient armez of Islington."

In the course of the same and the following century, minstrels used to travel the country in search of bride-ales, Christmas dinners, fairs, &c. and whenever they could do so, gained access to the halls of the gentry and nobility. This custom may still be noticed, though the modern minstrels are of a reduced description. Brand, in his "History of Newcastle," (vol. ii. pp. 353-4) states that there was a society of waits, or musicians, at that town; and by an order of Common Council, Nov. 4th, 1646, they were to go about morning and evening, according to ancient custom. By a like order of 1675, they were enjoined going about the town in the winter season, and they had certain privileges in preference to strangers. In other towns it is probable that similar societies existed with like privileges;* the sworn waits of the present day are descended from such, but they have sadly neg-

* "In the Privy Purse Expences of Henry VII. are entries of payments to the waits of various towns through which he passed."—*Collier*, vol. i. p. 28. n.

lected the good old tunes; in winter nights lulling us with "Hush thee, my darling," or enlivening our frozen toes in imagination with a galope or mazurka; and in summer steaming it to Margate or Ramsgate, to harmonize the flocks that go to the great annual wash there, with "The Sea," "Ye Gentlemen of England," &c.

The practice of decorating churches and houses with evergreens is of very ancient date. From the earliest times branches of trees and flowers were used in religious ceremonies as emblems of gladness. Our Saviour himself permitted such a demonstration upon his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; it was natural therefore that the early Christians should adopt this symbol of rejoicing on the return of that season in which they commemorated the fulfilment of the promise to fallen man, in honour of the birth of our Saviour. The custom was, however, liable to abuse in common with others derived from the heathens; differences of opinion arose as to its propriety, and some of the councils endeavoured to abolish it. In the *Capitula Græcarum Synodorum*, A.D. 610, collected by *Martin* Bishop of *Bracara*, can. 73, it is enacted, that "It is not lawfull to keepe the wicked observations of kalends, nor to observe the festivals of the Gentiles; nor yet to begirt or adorne houses with laurel or greene boughes: for all this practice savours of Paganism." *

The usage however gained ground, and has been preserved to the present day. One of the earliest carols of the following collection, of the time of Henry VI. is called "A song on the Ivy and the Holly." Stowe mentions a storm of thunder and

* Prynne's Histrio-mastix, p. 581.

lightning on Candlemas-day 1444, which rooted up a standard of tree at the Leadenhall, in Cornhill, nailed full of holme and ivie for disport of Christmas to the people, which accident was by some attributed to the malignant spirit. Tusser, in the following century writes, "Get iuye and hull, woman decke vp thyne house."

The churchwardens accounts of various parishes, during the 15th and following centuries, contain entries of payments for evergreens at this season, of which many extracts are given by Ellis, in his notes to Brand's "Popular Antiquities," and in Nichols's "Illustrations of Manners and Expences," as from the accounts of St. Mary Hill, London, for 1487: "For holme and yve anenst Crist. 1*d.*" and again in the accounts of St. Martin Outwich, London:

"1524. Itm̃ for holy and ivy at Chrystmas, ij*d.* ob.

"1525. Payd for holy and ivye at Crystmas, ij*d.*"

During the civil wars, prior to the establishment of the Commonwealth, the practice was not abolished, and in 1647 the churchwardens of St. Margaret's Westminster "paid for rosemarie and baies that was stuck about the church at Christmas, 1*s.* 6*d.*" but were brought before the House of Commons in consequence. Even in the Commonwealth, when the Puritans had the ascendancy, it was preserved. Coles, in his "Art of Simpling," 1656, says, "In some places setting up of holly, ivy, rosemary, bayes, yew, &c. in churches at Christmass, is still in use. And thus Poor Robin's Almanack, in 1695, sings:

With holly and ivy,
So green and so gay,
We deck up our houses
As fresh as the day;

With bays and rosemary,
And laurel compleat,
And every one now
Is a king in conceit.

At present great variety is observed in decorating our houses and buildings, and many flowers are introduced that were unknown to our ancestors, but whose varied colours add to the cheerful effect, as the chrysanthemum, satin flower, &c. mingling with the red berry of the holly and the mystic misletoe. In the West of England the myrtle and laurustinum form a pleasing addition. In many parts of Germany, and in Sicily, a large bough is set up in the principal room at Christmas time, the smaller branches of which are hung with little presents suitable to the different members of the household. A good deal of innocent mirth and spirit of courtesy is produced by this custom.*

The misletoe, which forms an essential and prominent object in these decorations, was looked upon by our Pagan ancestors with a species of veneration; it is supposed to have been the sacred branch referred to by Virgil, in his description of the descent to the lower regions; and if so, may be presumed to have been in use in the religious ceremonies of the Greeks and Romans, as this description is considered an allegorical representation of some of their mysteries. It is well known that this plant was held sacred by the Druids and the Celtic nations, who attributed valuable medicinal qualities to it, calling it *allheal*, or in Welsh *guidhel*. The Gothic nations also attached extraordinary qualities to it, and it is said in the Edda to have been the cause of the death of Balder:

Frigga, when she adjured all the other plants,

* Journal of an Officer in the King's German Legion, 1827, 8vo. p. 281 n.

with the animals, birds, metals, earth, fire, water, reptiles, diseases, and poison, not to do him any hurt, neglected to take any oath from the misletoe, as it appeared too young and feeble to injure him. When the gods in their great assembly amused themselves therefore by throwing darts and other missiles at him, which all fell harmless, Loke, moved with envy, joined them in the shape of an old woman, and persuaded Hoder, who was blind, to throw a branch of misletoe, guiding his hand for the purpose, when Balder fell dead, pierced through and through.

The Druids used to collect the misletoe on the approach of the new year, with many mysterious ceremonies, such as cutting it with a golden sickle, and receiving it in a white cloth, the officiating Druids being also clad in white. This tended to increase the superstitious feeling of the people towards it, already aroused probably by the singular manner of its growth. As late as the 17th century peculiar efficacy was attached to it. Coles, in his "Art of Simpling" (1656, p. 67,) observes that "If one hang misletoe about the neck, the witches can have no power of him." Some lingering superstition remains to the present day, and in many houses a bunch of misletoe is suspended from the ceiling, under which the male part of the assembly have the privilege of taking the females and saluting them, at the same time they should wish them a happy new year, and present them with one of the berries for good luck. In other places people try lots by the crackling of the leaves and berries in the fire.

Mumming and theatrical representations at this season have been already mentioned ; but as something of the same description still exists in parts of the kingdom, chiefly towards the Northern and

Western extremities, although far different in public estimation from those of former times, a few further particulars will not be out of place. Traces of the fool's dance, a sort of religious mummery at Christmas, may be discovered as far back as the time of Edward the Third. In the early part of Henry the Sixth's reign, there are payments to "Jakke Travaill & ses compaignons faisans diverses jeuues & entreludes dedeins le feste de Noell devant notre dit sire le Roi."*

The feast of fools, and the feast of asses, with other similar observances, were probably derived from some of the rites of idolatry. The ceremonies on the last of these festivals, as described by Ducange, appear to us in the present day as perfect profanation of religion, there being a regular burlesque service in honour of the ass, and all sorts of impurities committed even at the holy altar, and a hymn was sung, beginning as follows:

Orientis partibus
Adventavit asinus;
Pulcher et fortissimus,
Sarcinis aptissimus.

Hez, sire asnes, car chantez;
Belle bouche rechignez;
Vous aurez du foin assez
Et de l'avoine à plantez.

The chorus to the last verse was in the following beautiful strain—

Hez va! hez va! hez va hez!
Bialx Sire Asnes car allez;
Belle bouche car chantez.†

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* Nichols's Progresses, xli. n.

† A full account of this service is given by Ducange, voce *Festum:* and in Hone on Mysteries, p. 160, &c. many interesting particulars will be found respecting this and similar customs.

In some places this feast might appear to have reference to the journey of the Virgin Mary into Egypt with the infant Saviour, as a beautiful girl was chosen and placed, with the child in her arms, on an ass decorated with splendid trappings, on which she proceeded to the altar. So popular was this ceremony even among the higher clergy, that in 1212 it was found necessary by the Council of Paris to prohibit archbishops and bishops from attending it; but even this proved ineffectual, and the church rulers continued their endeavours for centuries to restrain and abolish these absurdities, for after the respectable part of the clergy had withdrawn from them, they still continued popular among the laity, and were not finally abolished till the very end of the sixteenth century, although they might have undergone various modifications; and there were some remnants even in the middle of the seventeenth.

A species of mumming existed in France in the sixteenth century, supposed to be of pagan origin.

"A man, personating a Prince, (*roi follet*, 'a mummer,') set out from the village into the woods, bawling out, '*Au gui menez, le Roi le veult;*' the monks followed in the rear, with their begging-boxes, which they rattled, crying '*tire-lire,*' and the people put money in them, under the fiction that it was for a lady in labour. Persons in disguise (*guis-cards*) forced themselves into dwelling-houses, playing antic tricks, and bullying the inmates for money and choice victuals, crying, '*tire-lire, tire-lire, maint du blanc et point du bis (pis).*' Hence, the late Professor Robison of Edinburgh derived the guis-carts of Edinburgh, and their cry, '*Hog menay, troll lollay*, gie's your white bread, and none o' your gray.'"* At a subsequent period, people used

* Upham's History of Budhism, p. 63, n. He connects the Christmas gambols in France with the eastern mytho-

to go through the towns and villages singing and begging money, and crying out, "Au Guy! L'An Neuf!"

In the collection of Noei Borguignon, of which some account will be given hereafter, it is stated that at Dijon, about the year 1700, masked persons went about at night during Christmas, some playing, some dancing. The players were called *mommons*, the dancers simply *masques*. Among the mummers in England, as late as the seventeenth century, the hobby-horse was an important character, but in more recent times he appears to have been discarded—"For, oh! the hobby-horse is forgot."

There also appears to have been a sort of goblin or buffoon, dressed in calf-skin. In an old play called "Wily Beguiled," in the early part of James the First, a character called Robin Goodfellow says, "I'll go put on my devilish robes, I mean my Christmas calf's-skin suit, and then walk to the woods: O, I'll terrify him, I warrant ye."

A remnant of this appears in a set of mummers mentioned by Jackson about 1760 in his "History of the Scottish Stage," (pp. 410–11,) whose amusements began with a sort of prologue, announcing the performers, as they came on successively with the clown. The first verse he gives thus—

> My name it is Captain Calf-tail, Calf-tail,
> And on my back it is plain to be seen;
> Although I am simple, and wear a fool's-cap,
> I am dearly belov'd of a queen.

In the Christmas mumming continued in Ireland to recent times, the Fool generally appeared in a calf, or cow-skin. The mummers, or *gysarts*, in

logy; and considers, as others have done, the Scottish *hog menay*, and the French *au gui menez*, as corruptions of the Greek ἁγια μηνη, or holy moon.

Scotland and the north of England are not yet obsolete, and still have plays similar to those of the Cornish, which will presently be described. Indeed, the Christmas plays, in the few places where they yet exist, are very similar, implying therefore a common origin, though modern interpolations of an absurd description constantly occur.

Many of the old Christmas customs are preserved in Cornwall to an extent not exceeded by any county in the kingdom. The higher orders, unfortunately, are gradually withdrawing their sanction, so that in a few years there will scarcely be any traces left. In a county long famed for its hospitality, it may be imagined that when Christmas feasts prevailed throughout the country among people of wealth, the Cornish would at least equal any of their neighbours; and as an example may be stated, the establishment of John Carminow, whose family was of high repute in the county about the time of Henry the Eighth. Hals says, that "he kept open house for all comers and goers, drinkers, minstrells, dancers, and what not, during the Christmas time, and that his usual allowance of provision for those twelve days, were twelve fat bullocks, twenty Cornish bushels of wheat, (*i. e.* fifty Winchesters)* thirty-six sheep, with hogs, lambs, and fowls, of all sort, and drink made of wheat and oat-malt proportionable; for at that time barley-malt was little known or used in those parts." This hospitality has been continued to the present period, and is one of the Christmas customs prevalent among all classes.

Christmas plays, however puerile they seem at present, are of a remote origin, and supposed by many to be as old as the time of the Crusades, and

* It should be *sixty* Winchester.

that hence arose the favourite subject of St. George and the Dragon. But the Crusaders perhaps only varied the representations then existing. Saint George and his friends, however, were introduced into theatrical performances many centuries since, and it is not improbable that some of those religious adventurers might have introduced them. A play of this description was performed before Henry the Fifth at Windsor, in 1416, when the Emperor Sigismund was with him. The favourite romance of "The Seven Champions of Christendome" was written about the time of Elizabeth, by Richard Johnson, who, according to Percy,* copied from the metrical romances of former ages, and particularly the story of St. George and the fair Sabra, from the old poetical legend of "Syr Bevis of Hampton," which is more ancient than Chaucer.

The Cornish also had their Guary, or miracle plays, with subjects taken from the Scriptures, at a period equally remote; and remains may yet be seen of the rounds, or amphitheatres, erected for their representation. To these, at the appointed times, the people flocked from many miles distant, and the performance must frequently have lasted a considerable time, if we may judge from the length of that called "The Creation of the World," edited recently by Davies Gilbert, Esq. This, however, was nothing to be compared with the dramatic effusions of the Society of Parish Clerks of London, some of which are related by Stowe to have lasted for eight days.

The actors probably were not very apt scholars, as there was one called the Ordinary, whose office it was to follow about and prompt them. Carew, in his "Survey of Cornwall," mentions an amusing

* Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. iii. p. 270.

circumstance occasioned by this practice: it having come to the turn of one of the actors to go on the stage, the ordinary said, "Goe forth, man, and shew thy selfe." The actor, from ignorance, or more probably from a sort of Listonian affected stupidity, stepped forward, made his bow (if bows were then in fashion) and repeated, "Goe forth, man, and shew thy selfe." The ordinary whispered in his ear, "Oh, you marre all the play." The actor, with appropriate gesture, repeated aloud, "Oh, you marre all the play." The prompter then lost his patience, and reviled him with all the bitter terms he could think of, which the actor invariably repeated aloud with a steady serious countenance, as if engaged in the most solemn performance. The ordinary was at last obliged to give over, and the assembly, according to Carew, received "a great deale more sport and laughter than 20 such guaries could have afforded."

Borlase, in his "Natural History of the County," mention three Cornish interludes of the 15th century, in the Bodleian Library: the 1st, containing "The Creation of the World;" the 2nd, "The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and the 3rd, "The Resurrection." "The Creation of the World," by William Jordan, was written by him in 1611. He was a Helstone man; but whether the same Jordan who officiated as a sort of city poet laureate about the same time, does not appear.*

The original language of the county became obsolete probably full a century since, and for a long time previous to that, had not been the preva-

* The Shakspearian reader will be amused in this Cornish Interlude to find the expression "Tely valy" used as an exclamation, which will remind him of "Tillie Vallie Lady," &c.; but the language in which it is written does not appear to be pure old Cornish.

lent dialect. Such compositions as existed in it appear to have been neglected, or at least very few now exist, the best examples of which the literary world has been favoured with by Mr. Gilbert. The plays in the Cornish language were probably succeeded by imperfect and garbled translations, or imitations.

The legend of St. George became also mixed up with much extraneous matter, though kept distinct from the Scripture plays. Borlase says, that in his time the lower people "carryed on miserable dialogues on Scripture-subjects; when their memory could go no further, they filled up the rest of the entertainment with more puerile representations, the combats of puppets, the final victory of the hero of the drama, and death of his antagonist."

These plays at present are performed only by persons of the lower order, chiefly young persons, who, in the West of Cornwall, go about the towns, stopping at the inns, and gentlemen's houses, whereever they are likely to collect money, reciting, in doggrel rhymes, the history of St. George. The plot and the diction are certainly of a humble description; but I have nevertheless, though with some hesitation, inserted a specimen after the Carols. Scarcely any two sets of actors perform them alike, though the characters and plot, if it may be called one, are similar.

So little do the actors know the history of their own drama, that sometimes General Wolfe is introduced, who first fights St. George, and then sings a song about his own death. I have also seen the Duke of Wellington represented. Occasionally there is a sort of anti-masque, or burlesque (if it will admit of such) at the end of the performance, when some comic characters enter, called, Hub Bub, Old 'Squire, &c. and the piece concludes with a dance.

St. George and the other tragic performers are dressed somewhat in the style of morris dancers, with white trowsers and waistcoats, shewing their shirt-sleeves, and are much decorated with ribbons and handkerchiefs, each carrying a drawn sword in his hand, if they can be procured, otherwise a cudgel. They wear high caps of pasteboard, covered with fancy paper, adorned with beads, small pieces of looking-glass, bugles, &c. several long strips of pith generally hanging down from the top, with shreds of different-coloured cloth strung on them, the whole having a fanciful and smart effect. The Turk sometimes has a turban; Father Christmas is personified as a grotesque old man, wearing a large mask and wig, with a huge club in his hand; the Doctor, who is a sort of merryandrew to the piece, is dressed in some ridiculous way, with a three-cornered hat and painted face. The female, when there is one, is in the costume of her great-grandmother. The hobby-horse, when introduced, has a sort of representation of a horse's hide; but the dragon and the giant, when there is one, frequently appear with the same style of dress as the knights.

The play of "Alexander, the King of Egypt," as acted by the Mummers in the North of England, was printed at Newcastle in the year 1788, and bears a great similarity to those just described. Mr. Reddock, in Hone's "Every-day Book," vol. ii. p. 18, gives an account of a similar play in Scotland. Besides this regular drama of St. George, Guisards, or geese-dancers, as they are called, go about, the males and females frequently exchanging attire, and visit the different houses. Heath, in his account of the Scilly Islands, in 1750, mentions a similar custom.

There are two or three peculiar games or pastimes used at this time by the lower orders in the

west of Cornwall, which may be considered as rough substitutes for some of the games of forfeits practised by children; the first, however, is of much antiquity, as Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes," gives a drawing of a similar game of the date of the 14th century. Each end of a round pole, about ten feet long, is placed on a chair, on one of these is a lighted candle; the adventurer mounts the pole with his face towards this, having in his hand a small stick with a piece of paper tied to it: the trial is to get both his heels up crossways upon the pole, and endeavour to light the paper from the candle; many awkward tumbles are occasioned in the attempt, each of the heroes in turn getting a fall "upon the planchen."

Another game is called "The tinkeler's (Tinker's) shop." A large iron pot, with a mixture of soot and water, is placed in the middle of the room; one of the party acts as master of the shop, having a small mop in his left hand and a short stick in his right, as his comrades have also; each of these assumes a name, as old Vulcan, Mend-all, Tear'em, All-my-men, &c. They all kneel down round the vessel: the master cries out, "every one and I;" they then all hammer away as fast as they can, some with ridiculous grimaces: the master suddenly cries out, "All-my-men and I," "Mend-all and I," or any other name he chooses, upon which all are to cease working except the individual named. If any of them fail in attending to this, they are treated with a salute from the mop, well soaked in the sable liquid; and as the master contrives to puzzle them by frequently changing the names, and sometimes calling two or three together, the faces of most of the party are soon reduced to a state that would make even Warren's jet blacking look pale with envy.

Another amusement is called "The Corn-market," where also there is a master, who has an assistant called Spy-the-market; another essential character is old Penglaze, who has a blackened face, and a staff in his hand, and a person is girded round with a horse's hide, or what is supposed to be such, to serve as his horse; they are placed towards the back of the market. The other players have each some even price appropriated to them for names, as Twopence, Sixpence, Twelvepence, &c. The master then calls "Spy-the-market," to which the man replies, "Spy-the-market." The master again calls "Spy-the-market," who replies, "Ay, sirrah." The master then asks the price of corn, the man names some price that is borne by one of the players, as for instance "Twopence." The master then holds the same conversation with Twopence as he had with his man, and so on till some mistake is made, by any of the party not answering to his name, when the unlucky offender is to be sealed, which constitutes the principal amusement of the game. The master goes up to the delinquent, and taking up his foot says, "Here is my seal, where is old Penglaze's seal?" and gives him a blow on the foot. Old Penglaze then comes in on his horse, which winces and capers about grotesquely. He is then told that a fine colt wants shoeing, for which he says his reward is a full gallon of moonlight, besides all other customs for shoeing in that market. The shoe of the colt is taken off, and Penglaze gives him one or two hard blows on the sole of the foot, after which he rides off again, his horse capering more than before and sometimes throwing the old gentleman off.

In Yorkshire and Northumberland, and some other parts, the ancient custom of the Sword-dance is still kept up at Christmas, or was to a very recent period, the dancers being accompanied by a

fiddler, a character called Bessy, and one personating the Doctor. Another custom in Yorkshire is the Hagman-heigh, on New Year's Eve. The keeper of the pinfold goes round knocking at certain doors with a song beginning,

> To-night it is the new-year's night, to-morrow is the day ;
> We are come about for our right and for our ray,
> As we us'd to do in old King Henry's day :
> Sing, fellows, sing, Hagman-heigh, &c.

He concludes with wishing a merry Christmas, and a happy New Year.* But it would far exceed the limits of this Introduction to enter into a detail of the different county customs, even if I had the means of doing so ; therefore, like Dogberry, having bestowed all my tediousness upon your worships, I will proceed to state a few particulars relating to the singing of carols.

Music was introduced into the sacred rites of the earliest nations. The Egyptians used it, the Druids also had recourse to it, and it formed a considerable part of the religious ceremonies of the Greeks and Romans. The Hebrews had hymns and psalms from their first becoming a nation ; one of the earliest on record being that in which Miriam and her companions joined on the overthrow of the Egyptians. The Anglo-Saxons and other Gothic nations greatly encouraged psalmody. If we may judge from those specimens that have been handed down to us, the tunes and melodies were but few, and those of a nature that do not impress us with any favourable idea of their harmony.

The Heathen Romans were in the habit of singing hymns on the calends of January, on which account some of the early canons of the church prohibited the practice at that time, but the corruptions

* Hone's Table-Book, part i. p. 7–8.

introduced in the songs and dances on some of the early festivals of the saints, probably sprang from this source. The early Christians were in the constant habit of singing psalms and hymns, especially on their festivals and on the vigils of their saints, when, according to Burney, they sang sacred songs after supper. The practice is referred to both by St. Paul and St. James; and Pliny the younger, in his letter to Trajan respecting the Christians, A.D. 107, says, "They were wont to meet together on a stated day, before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as to God."

According to Durand, the bishops in the earlier ages of the Church were accustomed on Christmas-day to sing hymns among their clergy, from whence may be derived our Christmas hymns or carols. Bishop Taylor observes, however, that the "Gloria in Excelsis," the well known hymn sung by the Angels to the Shepherds at our Lord's Nativity, was the earliest Christmas carol. In the second century Telesphorus, in his "Decretall Epistle," mentions the practice as already noticed.*

In the fourth century the Ambrosian chant was established in the church at Milan, when St. Ambrose was bishop of that place, and church music began to take a more settled and imposing form. The Anglo-Saxons, after their conversion to Christianity, preserved their fondness for religious music, and it was a common article among their guilds or fraternities, that each member should sing two psalms a day, one for the living members, the other for those that were dead.†

They had also, no doubt in consonance with the practice of other countries, peculiar hymns for particular feast days, and especially for the feast of the

* Page xiii. *ante*.

† Henry's History of England, vol. iv. 367.

Nativity, which was considered one of the greatest in the year, and some scattered specimens may probably yet be found. When the Anglo-Normans obtained the sway in this country, their priests introduced more pomp into the ceremonies of religion, and equally encouraged church music. There are some Latin hymns, with music of the time of King Stephen, still existing in the British Museum.*

In the 12th century, and probably sooner, the monks composed legends in verse of the lives of the saints, &c. for the proper holidays; and at Christmas therefore religious pieces suited to the time were recited, accompanied with appropriate hymns or songs. Some of these spiritual songs came gradually to be introduced into private meetings, and others were composed for the same purpose of a lighter description. The theatrical exhibitions at this season of the year, also frequently contained songs incidental to the performances, which, as before stated, were at first subjects taken from the Scriptures.

The term *carol* appears originally to have signified songs intermingled with dancing, or a sort of divertisement; and it is used in that sense in "Le Roman de la Rose," and by Chaucer and other old writers. It was afterwards applied to festive songs, and as these became most prevalent during Christmas, it has for a long time past designated (though not exclusively) those sung during that feast; but these should in strictness be distinguished from Christmas hymns, which are of a more solemn nature, although they are now generally confounded together under the name of carols.

In one of the Coventry pageants, being that of the Shearmen and Tailors, towards the beginning

* Royal MSS. Caligula, A. xiv.

of the 15th century, three songs are introduced, sufficiently rude in their construction, which from the subjoined specimens may be considered in the nature of carols; and several other examples of ancient ones will be found in the following collection.

SONG I.—(*By the Shepherds.*)

As I out rode this endenes-night,*
Of thre ioli sheppardes I saw a sight,
And all a bowte there fold a star shone bright;
They sange terli terlow.
So mereli the sheppards ther pipes can blow.

SONG II.—(*By the Women.*)

Lully lulla, þʷ littell tiné child,
By by, lully lullay, þʷ littell tyné child,
By by, lully lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve þᵢˢ day
This pore yongling for whom we do singe
By by, lully lullay.
Herod the king, in his raging,
Chargid he hath this day
His men of might in his owne sight
All yonge children to slay.

That wo is me, pore child, for thee,
And ever morne and say,
For thi parting nether say nor singe
By by, lully lulla.

The custom of singing carols had become general about this time; and in some of the early ones scraps of Latin will be found introduced, adopted probably from the Christmas hymns, for which these songs were intended as a substitute. So popular

* From the Saxon endenehȝt, *the last.*

did they become, that W. de Worde, one of our earliest printers, was induced to print a set of them in the year 1521, containing amongst others, the celebrated Boar's Head carol, anciently sung upon the introduction of that dish on Christmas-day. In the particular instructions given for the regulation of the household of Henry the Seventh, the ceremonies to be observed on the several feast-days during the Christmas are set forth; even describing the particular robes and dress to be worn by the King on each of them. On Twelfth-day he is to go crowned, and wear his robes royal; and on Twelfth-night is the following direction—

"Item, the chappell to stand on the one side of the hall, and when the steward cometh in at the hall-doore with the wassell, he must crie three tymes, Wassell, wassell, wassell; and then the chappell to answere with a good songe; and in likewise if it bee in the great chamber."

This song, above referred to, was no doubt a carol, and in the book of expences of Elizabeth, Queen of Henry the Seventh, in the 18th of his reign, we may see the value of one in those days, as William Cornyshe, who appears to have been a favourite poet and composer at court, then received 13*s.* 4*d.* "for setting of carrall vpon Cristmas-day in reward." The price of a collection of carols was equally moderate with the reward given for setting one, for in the churchwardens' accounts of St. Mary at Hill, London, A.D. 1537, is an entry, "To Sr Mark for Carolls for Christmas, and for 5 square Books, iij*s.* iiii*d.*" In the regulations of the Northumberland household in 1512, it appears that the children of the chapel were allowed an extraordinary compensation of 6*s.* 8*d.* for singing Gloria in Excelsis upon Christmas-day in the morning. Carols continued much in vogue throughout this cen-

tury. Tusser mentions one to be sung to the tune of King Solomon; and it would have been very desirable if some of the genuine and popular carol tunes of that age had been preserved, which may however be the case, although difficult of proof.

Some of the airs hereafter given, are of considerable antiquity, and one or two of them are said to have been known in Cornwall for three hundred years past. In the Additional MSS. British Museum, Nos. 5465 and 5665, being collections of ancient songs in the time of Henry VII. and VIII. are some carols and pious songs, with the music generally in three or four parts, but not of sufficient interest for any but musical antiquaries, and scarcely intended for the lower orders of that age. Among the composers are Edmond Turges, Gilbert Banaster, and the before-named William Cornysshe; and perhaps the 13*s.* 4*d.* carol may be in the collection. Some of the old psalm tunes, which were preserved at the time of the Reformation, have considerable similarity in style to the old carol tunes, as for instance, the Bristol, Salisbury, and Kenchester tunes, among Playford's psalms, and others attached to the early editions of the English Liturgy.

In Shakspeare's time, carols were sung at night during Christmas about the streets, and made a pretext for collecting money. The Reformation also having abolished Latin hymns in the established church, Christmas carols came into general use in the country churches. About the same time, Sternhold and Hopkins made their English version of the Psalms; the former died in 1549, and his fifty-one psalms were published in the same year. The entire version was published by John Day in 1562, with "apt notes to sing them withall."

The custom of singing carols was, however, by no means confined to the reformed religion, for the Roman Catholics equally preserved the custom; as indeed is done to this day in the Catholic countries on the Continent. Barnaby Googe, in his translation of "Naogeorgus, gives the following account of Christmas-day in the middle of the sixteenth century, among other things:

Three masses every priest doth sing upon that solemne day,
With offrings unto every one, that so the more may play.
This done, a woodden childe in clowtes is on the aultar set,
About the which both boyes and gyrles do daunce and trymly jet;
And carrols sing in prayse of Christ, and, for to helpe them heare,
The organs aunswere every verse with sweete and solemne cheare.
The priestes do rore aloude; and round about the parentes stande
To see the sport, and with their voyce do helpe them and their hande.

Naogeorgus also mentions a custom of the same date, in parts of Germany, for the young people of both sexes to go about from house to house on the three Thursday nights preceding the Nativity, knocking at the doors and singing Christmas carols, and wishing a happy new year,—a custom yet scarcely obsolete in some parts of England.

There is a story on record, of a terrible plague at Goldsberg, in 1553, which carried off above 2500 persons, leaving not more than twenty-five housekeepers alive in the place. The plague abating, one of the survivors went on Christmas-eve to the Lower Ring, and sang a carol, and was by degrees joined by a few others, to excite each other in thanksgiving. Hence arose a custom for the people to assemble in large numbers, at the Upper

and Lower Ring on Christmas morning, to sing carols, beginning with

Unto us this day a child is born.*

In the grand Christmasses kept up at Court, and other places, the singing of carols always constituted part of the necessary ceremonies. Among the regulations for conducting a feast of this description at one of the Inns of Court, in the early part (4th year) of Queen Elizabeth, as given by Dugdale, is the following for Christmas eve: "At night, before supper, are revels and dancing, and so also after supper, during the twelve daies of Christmas. The antientest Master of the Revels is, after dinner and supper, to sing a caroll or song; and command other gentlemen then there present to sing with him and the company; and so it is very decently performed." (fol. 1671, p. 150-155.)

Christmas carols at this time were probably divided into two sorts: one of a more scriptural or serious nature, sung in churches, and through the streets, and from house to house, ushering in the Christmas morning, and sung afterwards, morning and evening, until Twelfth-day; the other, of a more convivial nature, and adapted to the season of feasting and carousing. The convivial, or "jolie carols," as Tusser calls them, were sung by the company, or by the itinerant minstrels that attended the feasts for the purpose, during the daily revelry at the houses of the wealthy throughout the Christmas. Some of them were called Wassel Songs, and may be traced back to the Anglo-Normans, who were very prone to conviviality, and encouraged every thing that was likely to aid it. An Anglo-Norman song of this description, as old

* Friendship's Offering, 1823.

as the 13th century, with an elegant translation by Mr. Douce, is printed in his "Illustrations of Shakspeare," and also, with some variations, in Brand's "Popular Antiquities," by Ellis. Several collections of carols appear to have been printed in the course of the 16th century, some of which will be more particularly mentioned in a subsequent part.

In the 17th century, carol-singing continued in great repute, and was considered as a necessary ceremony, even in the feasts of the higher orders. During the proceedings of the celebrated Christmas Prince, at St. John Baptist's College, Oxford, in 1607, when the boar's head was brought-in in state, a peculiar carol was sung (which will be found in the subsequent pages) wherein the whole company joined by way of chorus. An amusing story, connected with carol-singing, is related in "Pasquil's Jests, mixed with Mother Bunche's Merriments, &c. 1609,"* affording another example of the influence which the fair sex (properly) have over us.

"*A tale of a merry Christmas Carroll sung by women.*

"There was sometime an old knight, who being disposed to make himselfe merry in a Christmas time, sent for many of his tenants, and poore neighbors, with their wives, to dinner: when having made meat to be set on the table, would suffer no man to drinke, till he that was master ouer his wife should sing a carroll, to excuse all the company: great nicenesse there was, who should bee the musician, now the cuckow time was so farre off. Yet with much adoe, looking one upon another, after a dry hemme or two, a dreaming companion drew out as much as hee durst, towards an ill-fashioned ditty. When hauing made an end, to

* British Bibliographer, vol. i. p. 42.

the great comfort of the beholders, at last it came to the women's table, where likewise commandment was giuen, that there should no drinke be touched till she that was master ouer her husband had sung a Christmas carroll; whereupon they fell all to such a singing, that there was neuer heard such a catterwalling peece of musicke. Whereat the knight laughed heartely, that it did him halfe as muche good as a corner of his Christmas pie."

This rule, as to "No Song no Supper," with some modifications, must have been prevalent at this time; for in the old ballad, called, "The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of *Robin Hood*, with Clorinda, Queen of *Titbury* Feast," being one of the oldest of the Robin Hood set, the Squire at *Gamwel-Hall* says, on his feast given on Christmas-day,

—— Not a man here shall taste my *March* beer
Till a *Christmas*-Carol he does sing:
Then all clapt their hands, and they shouted and sung
Till the hall and the parlour did ring.

Now mustard and braun, roast beef and plumb-pies,
Were set upon every table, &c.*

In the year 1630 appeared "Slatyr's Psalms," intended for "Christmas Carolls." These, and similar collections, were probably encouraged by the Puritan party, who, we have before seen, endeavoured to abolish the observance of Christmas, (when they were in power) while their opponents supported those of a lighter description. Several writers of this period, even during the height of "civil dudgeon," mention the practice of singing carols.

Sir Thomas Overbury (who died in 1613), in his character of the Franklin, talks of "the wakefull ketches on Christmas eve;" and a few years after

* Collection of Old Ballads. Lond. 1723, p. 69.

this, the following description is given of an hospitable housekeeper:* "Suppose Christmas now approaching, the ever-green ivie trimming and adorning the portals and partcloses of so frequented a building; the usuall carolls, to observe antiquitie, cheerefully sounding; and that which is the complement of his inferior comforts, his neighbours, whom he tenders as members of his own family, joyne with him in this consort of mirth and melody."

Stevenson, about the middle of this century, introduces old Christmas talking of the former festivities of the season, of sitting by the fire, with a bowl of lamb's wool; after which some sang carols; the servants went to dancing, and sung one to the tune of Hey,

> Let's dance and sing, and make good cheer,
> For Christmass comes but once a year.

And for the recreations of January he mentions the "chearfull carrols of the wassel cup—cards and dice purge many a purse, and the adventurous youth shew their agility in shooing the wild mare. The *Lord of Misrule* is no meane man for his time; masking and mumming, and choosing king and queen."†

Ballad-singing was encouraged in this century, though, during the Commonwealth, endeavours were made to check all similar amusements. Warton mentions two celebrated itinerant singers about the middle of it, called, "Outroaringe Dick" and "Wat Wimbas," who occasionally made twenty shillings per day, by attending fairs, &c.; and such

* Whimzies, or a new cast of Characters, 1631, cited in Ellis's edition of Brand, p. 351. n.

† The Twelve Months, &c. cited in the same, p. 382. n. and 394.

men as these were probably skilled in carol-singing also. After the Restoration people had all their amusements restored to them without restraint; and in some instances, perhaps, fell into the opposite extreme, and indulged in too much conviviality. The Christian festivities, which for the last few years had been checked, and the promoters of them even looked upon with suspicion, were now revived throughout the country, and enjoyed with the more zeal from the previous difficulties under which they had laboured: many, who would gladly have partaken of them, having refrained from so doing for fear of giving offence to the ruling powers, not having courage to imitate the example of their less scrupulous neighbours.

From this time, carol-singing was probably continued with unabated zeal, till towards the end of the last century, since which the practice has declined, and many old customs have been gradually becoming obsolete. It would be needless to give many references to publications of the 18th century, to prove the continuance of the custom, as the fact of its present existence in several parts of the kingdom proves such a continuing custom, and old people must recollect when it was much more general.

In the Northern counties, and in some of the midland, carol-singing is still preserved. In the metropolis a solitary itinerant may be occasionally heard in the streets, croaking out "God rest you merry, gentlemen," or some other old carol, to an ancient and simple tune. Indeed many carols are yet printed in London for the chapmen, or dealers in cheap literature; and I have some scores of halfpenny and penny carols of this description, published chiefly by Pitts, of St. Andrew's Street, Seven Dials; Catnach, Monmouth Court, Monmouth Street; and Batchelar, Long Lane, Smithfield, who

are large venders of ballads, and single, or broadside pieces. Several of these carols have wood-cuts of the rudest description; others, again, have embellishments that might have been considered very creditable for the price at which they are afforded, until recent examples had shown us the extent of ornament which may be lavished even on a penny publication. Some of these carols, I was informed by the publishers, are in considerable request, and are printed off as the demand requires.—The custom prevails also in Ireland and Wales. In the latter country, in particular, there are several collections known in the Welsh language; some of which are of ancient date. Others are composed by the modern village-poet; and Mr. Roberts, in his "Cambrian Popular Antiquities," (1815,) particularly mentions Hugh Morris as a favourite writer and poetic genius in this line, in modern days. And there was a notice recently of the death of a Welsh poet, David Jones, at Rhuddlan, in Flintshire, aged sixty-nine, who for the last fifty-three years had annually sung a carol, of his own composing, on Christmas day, in the church there.*

In the West of England, and especially in the western parts of Cornwall, carol-singing is still kept up, the singers going about from house to house wherever they can obtain encouragement, and, in some of the parish churches, meeting on the night of Christmas-eve and singing-in the sacred morning. Heath, in his "Account of the Scilly Islands," mentions the practice of singing carols in churches on Christmas-day in his time (about 1750), and a collection made from the congregation by carrying about a hat for the benefit of the singers.

The modern part of the ensuing collection (with

* Literary Gazette, Oct. 13th, 1832.

a trifling exception) is selected from a very large number of carols procured in this county, frequently from the singers themselves, and sometimes from aged persons who had been once famed in such capacity; occasionally from private sources, where they had long been preserved in old families; and to one collection of this description I am particularly indebted. I was unable to discover any carol in the old Cornish dialect, nor did I expect to do so, it having been so long obsolete as a spoken language, and leaving such few records either printed or in manuscript. Of these the best are preserved by Lluyd, Price, Borlase, and D. Gilbert in his recent publications on the subject. Like the other Celtic dialects, it was no doubt favourable for poetry, possessing the same facility of being converted into rhyme or metre, of which the Welsh is still an example. But when the language was discarded gradually from common usage, it appears to have met with unmerited neglect; for although it is inconvenient as a matter of policy to have a dialect in any country unknown to the greater part of the inhabitants, yet the Cornish language, as a subject of philological research, is one of great interest, being a remnant of Celtic literature differing in some respects from those still existing. A comparison therefore of the whole, observing the variations between them, and noting wherein they agree, would tend to give some insight into the original and primitive language from which they are all derived; one of the earliest probably in the annals of mankind. But a dissertation on this subject is not compatible with the nature of the present Introduction.

A few of the carols yet popular in Cornwall may be as old perhaps as the Reformation; for, according to their traditionary history, they are nearly

three hundred years old, having been handed down by succeeding generations, but the diction must have been gradually modernized. Two or three obtained from very aged persons, who said their fathers received them also when children from their parents, are no doubt of considerable antiquity, as well as some of those in manuscript, as many of these (ancient themselves) profess to have been copied from more ancient books; others are of a much more recent date. Several of the tunes appear to have been passed down orally, until some singer, more scientific perhaps than his fellows, fixed them on paper; but even now many of the carol-singers know them only by tradition and descent, which preserve them very faithfully; as in London, in the tunes of some of the old-fashioned ballad-singers, may occasionally be recognised some of great antiquity.

The oldest printed collection of Christmas carols mentioned is that published by Wynkyn de Worde, in the year 1521. The colophon of this work is, "Thus endeth the Christmasse carolles, newely inprinted at Londō, in the fletestrete, at the sygne of the sonne, by wynkyn de worde. The yere of our lorde, M.D.XXI."

Another old collection is thus intitled, being in black letter, as well as the preceding: "Christmas carolles newely Inprinted, *(Wood-cut of our Saviour crucified between the two thieves.)* Inprynted at London, in the Powltry, by Rychard Kele, dwellyng at the longe shop under saynt Myldredes Chyrche."

The editor of "Bibliographical Miscellanies," (4to. Oxford, 1813,) doubts whether the whole of this relique be of Kele's printing, since it is imperfect, and conceives it to be a part of at least three volumes of carols, as there are three different

sets of signatures. He gives some specimens, (from which I have taken the liberty of selecting,) and describes some of the songs as very gross. He states that the volume, or volumes, were probably printed between 1546 and 1552, during which time Kele lived at the long shop in the Poultry, and at the sign of the eagle near unto the Stocks Market, in Lombard-street. I have understood this curious volume to be in the possession of Sir Francis Freeling. In Brand's "Popular Antiquities," a collection of carols, black letter, and imperfect, is stated to be in the possession of Mr. Douce.

Tusser introduces a carol to the tune of King Salomon, of which the following are four of the lines.

> Euen Christ, I meane, that virgins child,
> In Bethlem born:
> That lambe of God, that prophet mild,
> Crowned with thorne!

On March 4th, 1559, there is a receipt entered in the register of the Stationers' Company from Ralph Newbery, for his licence for printing a ballad called "Kynge Saloman."

In 1562, John Tysdale had a licence for printing "Certayne goodly carowles to be songe to the glory of God." Again, "Crestenmas Carowles auctorisshed by my lord of London." A ballad of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is entered in 1567; and in 1569, an "Enterlude for boyes to handle and to passe tyme at Christimas." More instances follow.*

Thomas Becon, who died in 1570, published "Christmasse carols, very new and godly." His works were printed by John Day in 1563, fol.

Christopher Payne published "Christenmas car-

* Warton's History of Poetry, 8vo. vol. iv. p. 131, n.

rolles," licensed to James Roberts in 1569; and Ritson (Bibl. Poet.) states that Moses Powell set forth (or meditated) " A book of carolls" licensed to John Wolf, 11th December, 1587.

In 1597 was published at Edinburgh, " Ane Compendiovs Booke of Godly and Spiritvall Songs, collectit, &c. for avoyding of Sinne and Harlotrie," wherein are contained some carols. This collection, which was reprinted in 1801, was designed to supersede the use of profaner ballads, and the several songs and carols were adapted to popular tunes for that purpose; several of the latter are to be sung as *Neen Major Neale.*

In 1630, the following work was published with the intention of superseding the light species of carol then in use, " Certaine of David's Psalmes, intended for Christmas Carolls, fitted to the most common but solempne tunes, every where familiarly used, by William Slatyr, printed by Robert Young, 1630." 8vo.

Carols may occasionally be found in some of the writers of the seventeenth century, as in " Herrick's Works" for instance, where there are several pieces of this description, which were set to music by Mr. Henry Lawes, for the purpose of being performed before the Court of Charles the First. In the collection of Anthony à Wood, in Oxford, (No. 100, a.) are contained " Christmas Carols, 1642." " New Carols for the time of Christmas, 1661." " Christmas Carols, fit also to be sung at Easter." " New Christmas Carols, 1688," &c. About the same time with this last mentioned, was published " A smale Garland of pious and godly Songs, composed by a devout man, for the solace of his friends and neighbours in their afflictions. Printed in Gant (Ghent), 1684," small 8vo. This is said to have been published, like other works before mentioned,

to supersede the popular ballad, and may therefore, like them, have contained carols for the use of the people at Christmas, and other times when they were accustomed to sing them; as it appears that formerly they were not confined to Christmas, but that some were adapted for Easter, Whitsuntide, and other great festivals.

In the broadside lists of cheap books, ballads, &c. published from 100 to 150 years since, specimens of which may be seen in Bagford's collections in the British Museum, and in the lists of books attached to several of such small publications, the names of well-known carols occur, as, "When Jesus Christ was twelve years old"—"Joseph an aged man truly"—"Jury came to Jerusalem"—"Angel Gabriel"—"Christus natus est," &c. In a list also of Small Merry Books, sold by William Thackery, at the Angel in Duck Lane, is one intitled "Carrols."

Hone, who gives some interesting particulars relating to carol-singing,* mentions one in his numerous collection with this curious title, "*A Christmas Carol on Peko-Tea:* or, a Sacred Carol, which like tea that is perfectly good and fine, will be most grateful and useful all the year round, from Christmass to Christmass for ever. Humbly addressed to Queen Caroline, and the Princess Carolina, and all the Royal Family. By Francis Hoffman. London, 1729," 8vo. pp. 16.

In the present day, numerous single-sheet carols are printed in different parts of the kingdom, and in the metropolis as before mentioned; and in some very few instances, the tune is printed with them. There are some collections occasionally printed at

* Hone, on Mysteries, &c.; and see also his Every Day Book, Year Book, and Table Book, for much information on Christmas customs.

Birmingham (and perhaps elsewhere) in a small cheap form, containing several carols; such as, "The Christian's Sacred Lyre, or a choice Assortment of Original and Select Carols for Christmas," by Bloomer, of Birmingham.

In 1822 Mr. D. Gilbert published twelve favourite western carols, which were followed by a second edition in 1823, containing twenty, with a few old ballads, &c. There have been various collections of Welsh carols; among the Myvyrian MSS. belonging to the Cymmrodorion, are several; No. XIV. written about the year 1640, contains thirty-two, and No. XV. of about the same date, has two. Hone, (On Mysteries, &c. p. 103,) mentions two printed collections. "*Lffyr Carolan*, or the Book of Carols," (Shrewsbury, 4th edit. 1740, 12mo.) containing sixty-six for Christmas, and five Summer carols; "*Blodeugerdd Cymrii*, or the Anthology of Wales," (Shrewsbury, 1779, 8vo.) containing forty-eight Christmas carols, nine Summer carols, three May carols, one Winter carol, one nightingale carol, and a carol to Cupid." I wish I was enabled to lay before my female readers a translation of this "Carol to Cupid."

The practice of singing carols at Christmas on the Continent has been preserved to recent times. Calabrian peasants pour forth their minstrelsy before the images of the Virgin Mother, and thus pay their homage. Crysostom, the unfortunate youth in "Don Quixote," who was probably intended to have been the Coryphæus of his village, according to the goatherd's narrative, "was such a great man at composing couplets, that he made carols for Christmas-eve, and plays for the Lord's-day, which were represented by the young men in our village; and every body said that they were tip-top."

A few years since, previous to the troubles in the country, there was a custom in Spain at Christmas time of setting up in most respectable families what was called the *nacimiento*, which was a rude imitation of rocks with baby-houses, &c. and clay figures representing the Nativity, the shepherds, ox, and ass kneeling to the holy infant, with Joseph and Mary in a ruinous stable. Large parties used to meet for several nights dancing, reciting speeches from old Spanish plays called "Relaciones," and singing carols to the sound of the Zambomba.*

In France the carols, of which there are numerous collections, are called Noëls; the season itself being known by the name of Noël or Nouel; whence came our Nowell or Novell, which may be seen in many carols, though the last term is sometimes used in the sense of news or tidings. Some writers have derived Noel from Natalis (which seems however rather doubtful), † as signifying originally a cry of joy at Christmas. It may, perhaps, be derived from the same source as our Yule. It does not appear to have been confined originally to Christmas time, but was used as a cry of joy on many great occasions. At the proclamation of Henry the Sixth it was made use of. Pasquier gives many

* An instrument formed by stretching over the mouth of an earthen jar, a piece of parchment with a slender reed fixed in the centre, by means of which a hollow sound is produced, similar to that of the tambourine when rubbed by the middle finger.

† In Normandy it is called Nuel. In Burgundy, the people pronounce Noé for Noël. A certain priest at Dijon, wishing to avoid this error, fell into the opposite extreme, and in one of his discourses repeated three or four times, "l'Arche de Noël, et le Patriarche Noël." The Poitevins write Nau, and in "La vieille Bible des Noëls," is found, chanter No.

examples,* as at the baptism of Charles the Sixth in December 1368; the entry of Philip, Duke of Burgundy, with his sister, to Paris, in 1429; and the entry into Paris of Charles the Seventh in 1437, in which the people proclaimed their pleasure by loud shouts of "Noel, Noel," &c. On the entry also of Henry the Fifth into Rouen, after the siege thereof in January 1419, as described in an old English poem published in the 22nd volume of the "Archæologia," the people received him with shouts of Nowell.

"Wilcome our lorde," thay seide, "so fre!"
"Wilcome into thyne owne righte,
"As it is the wille of god almyzt."
Wt that thay kryde alle "nowelle!"

Lydgate also, in his account of the expedition of Henry the Fifth, and his return to London, says,

Virgynes out of the castelle gon glyde,
For ioye of him they were daunsyng,
They knelyd adoun alle in that tyde,
Nowell! Nowell! alle thei gon syng.

Chaucer uses the term in the same sense, though, being applied to Janus, it may be considered in the passage cited as appropriated to the time of Christmas.

Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle horn the wine:
Beforn him stant braune of the tusked swine,
And *nowel* crieth every lusty man.†

The ancient Christmas customs in France were, no doubt, similar in many respects to those used in England, having a common origin, and it was in like manner considered a great time for feasting and rejoicing. In the "Bataille de Karesme et de

* Les Recherches de la France, fol. 1643, pp. 383–4.
† Chaucer, 11564 & seq. The Frankeleine's Tale.

Charnage," an old poem about the year 1400, Karesme brings to his aid all the fishes, both of sea and fresh water, vegetables, pulse, cheese, milk, &c. Charnage has on his side the animals, birds, &c. The battle is fierce, night separates the combatants; but Karesme, hearing that Noël was approaching with considerable succours to his enemy, by advice of his council makes peace on certain terms.*

Carol singing also was of very early origin in France. In "Les Crieries de Paris," a manuscript poem of the end of the 13th century, par Guillaume de la Villeneuve, being a description of the cries then and previously in use, is this line:

Noel, Noel, à moult granz cris.

A note says, "Des livres contenant des Noels. Ces cantiques sont fort anciens. M. le Duc de la Valliere en avoit un manuscrit du XIVe siècle tres-precieux."†

The editor of "Noei Borguignon," mentions a volume containing three collections of old Noëls that had come to his hands, printed in 8vo. at Paris, in Gothic letter, two of them without date; in one of which is the Noël mentioned by Rabelais to have been composed in the Poitevin language, by "le Seigneur de S. George," named Frapin, the other in 1520, being "Chansons de Noëls nouveaux, par Lucas le Moigne," of which the following may serve as a specimen:

Ainsi la vierge pucelle
Ce doulx sauveur enfanta
Joseph luy tint la chandelle
qui tout tremblant regarda.

---

* Fabliaux et Contes par Barbazan et Meon, vol. iv. pp. 80–99.

† Fabliaux, &c. vol. ii. p. 282.

The same editor also mentions an old Noël, printed to the tune of "*A vous point vu la Perronelle?*" made in the time of Louis XII.

Brunet, in his "Manuel," (3rd ed. Brussels, 1821,) names the following collection of the same date. "Noels nouvellement composez à l'honneur de la nativité de nostre saulveur et redēpteur Jesu-Christ, qui se chantent sur le chāt de plusieurs belles chansons. *On les vend à Lyon en la maison de Claude le Nourry dict le Prince* (*vers* 1520), *pet. in* 8. *goth.*"

"Livret de 8 f. avec des petites gravures en bois en forme de bordures: on y remarque un Noël en langage lyonnais rustique. Vend 10 fr. Courtois."

About 1540, Clement Marot made his celebrated version of the Psalms into French rhyme, which were sung to popular tunes, and adopted by the French Court; many of the great personages selecting particular psalms as their favourites. Some of these were probably introduced at Christmas time, as well as the noels. About the same time Calvin introduced them into his congregation at Geneva; and in the neighbouring country of England, a collection, somewhat similar, appeared by Sternhold and Hopkins.

Pasquier, whose work on France was published in 1643, makes the following mention of the custom in his younger days. "Et en ma ieunesse c'estoit vne coustume que l'on auoit tournée en cérémonie, de chanter tous les soirs presque en chaque famille des Noüels, qui estoient chansons spirituelles faites en l'honneur de nostre Seigneur. Lesquelles on chante encores en plusieurs Eglises pendant que l'on celèbre la grand' Messe le iour de Noüel, lors que le Prestre reçoit les offrandes. Or cette allegresse manifesta encores hors les Eglises. Parce que le peuple n'auoit moyen plus ouuert pour de-

noter sa ioye, que de crier en lieu public Noüel, quand il vouloit congratuler à vn Prince."

About the same time appeared "Melanges de la Musique de Eustaché du Caurroy, Maistre de la Musique de la Chappelle du Roy," published at Paris, by his nephew, André Picart, 1610; one year after the death of the uncle, who was born in 1549. This collection contains some Noëls, of one of which Burney gives the music.* In "Recueil de Poetes Gascons, Première Partie, contenant les Oeuvres de Pierre Goudelin de Toulouse," Amsterdam, 1700, 8vo. are some carols. In 1701 a collection appeared at Dijon, in the dialect of the country, which at first gave some offence from the freedom of the carols; but they were saved partly by the naïveté of their patois, which also prevented their being perfectly understood. The first two editions were given by Le sieur Ressayre of Dijon. In 1720 an edition was published, with the title, "Noei Borguignon de Gui Barôzai," containing thirty-four noels and two chansons, with the music to each, and an ample glossary. Many of these are written in a very free and irreverent style, and with a vein of burlesque humour quite out of character. The seventh of them sets forth the Salutation of the Virgin, and her surprise thereon, in a style that reminds the reader of the old lines,

> Gaude Virgo, Mater Christi,
> Quæ per aurem concepisti.

A similar conceit may also be seen, in Moliere's "Ecole des Maris." The salutation of the angel is quite in the manner of a petit maitre,

> Po lai fenétre el antri,
> Et peù de queique distance
> Ai li fi lai révérance,
> Car el étó bén épri.

---

* Hist. of Music, vol. iii. pp. 284–86.

Dei vo gar, mai chére aimie,
Dit-i d'éne douce voi, &c.

very different from the gravity displayed in the Chester Mysteries, in the Wrightes Play, (about 1328.)

Gabriell.

Heale be thou, Marie mother free,
Full of grace god is wth thee
Amonge all women blessed thou bee
And the frute of thy bodye." *

In the fourteenth pageant of the Coventry Plays there is, however, some buffoonery introduced, quite as gross as in this noël, but which was probably well calculated for the amusement of the rude imagination of the audiences in those times. Mary is brought to trial before Ahizachar, the Bishop, for infidelity. The accusers are called *Primus et Secundus Detractor*. *Primus Detractor* observes,

In feyth, I suppose that this woman slepte
Withowtyn all coverte, whyle that it dede snowe,
And a flake therof into hyre mowthe crepte,
And therof the chylde in hyre wombe doth growe.

Secundus Detractor, following up the joke, warns her to take care, when the child is born, not to let the sun shine upon it.†

The fifth of these Noëi gives an account of the adoration and offering of the three kings, of which the following is an extract.

Ai lai Nativitai
Chanton, je vo suplie.
Troi Roi d'autre coutai
Moitre an estrôlôgie,
De l'anfan nôvea nai
Saivein lai prôfecie.

---

* Harleian MS. 2013.
† Collier's History of Dramatic Poetry, vol. ii. p. 178.

Ai lai Nativitai
Chanton, je vo suplie.
De l'étoile guidai
Tô troi de compagnie,
Patire sans menai
Gran seùte, ni meignie.

Ai lai Nativitai
Chanton, je vo suplie.
L'un prin soin d'épotai[1]
De lai myére candie,
L'autre d'or efeignai[2]
E'ne bonne pognie.

Ai lai Nativitai
Chanton, je vo suplie.
Le tier pu macherai,[3]
Qu'ein Roi d'Etiôpie,
Prezanti po son plai
De l'ançan d' Airaibie.

The thirteenth begins in the following quaint manner, being an address from a shepherd to his wife.

Le Borgei.
Fanne, coraige,
Le Diale á mor,
Aipré l'oraige
J'on lé beá jor.

Another is directed to be sung to the *Ouverture de Bellérophon*, beginning thus:

Lucifar.
[4]N'á pa si gran [5]clar
Qu'on [6]panseroo,
El á si béte [7]qu'ai croyoo,
Que Dei [8]varoo
Au gran [9]éproo,
[10]Qu'ai poteroo
Et l'or & lai [11]soo,

[1] apporter. [2] affiné. [3] barbouillé de noir. [4] n'est pas. [5] clerc. [6] penseroit. [7] qu'il croyoit. [8] viendroit. [9] apprèt. [10] qu'il porteroit. [11] soie.

Que le moindre [1]roo
Qui [2]vireroo
Su sé [3]lochefroo
Seró dé [4]geleignôte de boo.

Some curious particulars are incidentally introduced in the glossary. Amongst others, it is stated to be the custom in the province, for the master of a family with his wife and children to sing Noëls; "une très grosse buche" (called *lai suche de Noei,*) was put on the fire, and the younger children were then sent into the corner of the room to pray that the *suche* might produce *bon bons,* by the same means that the renowned Gulliver employed to extinguish the fire in the Lilliputian palace. On their return, packets of sugar-plums, &c. were found near the *suche,* to whom the children implicitly attributed the power of thus supplying them.

An account is also given (pp. 257–8) of a representation of the mystery of the Nativity, in which four animals were introduced, the ox and ass of the manger, (or crèche) the cock of the passion, and the lamb of St. John the Baptist, each of them speaking in his own manner. First, the cock exclaims with a piercing voice, *Christus natus est.* The ox with a lengthened bellowing (mugissement) demands *ubi?* pronouncing it as the Germans, oubi. The lamb answers in *Bethleem,* laying a stress on, and lengthening the first syllable; on which the ass concludes with *hinhamus, hinhamus,* signifying *eamus.*

Hone, (on Mysteries, p. 103.) describes a carol printed in London in 1701, having a similar conceit, with a large wood-cut, representing the stable at Bethlehem; Christ in the crib, watched by the Virgin and Joseph; shepherds kneeling, and angels attending; a man playing on the bagpipes; a

[1] rost. [2] tourneroit. [3] lèchefrite. [4] gelinotes de bois.

woman with a basket of fruit on her head; a sheep bleating, and an ox lowing on the ground; a raven croaking, and a crow cawing on the hay-rack; a cock crowing above them; and angels singing in the sky. The animals and birds have labels, expressing nearly the same words as described in the French representation. Brunet, in his "Manuel du Libraire," names "Traduction des noels bourguignons de la Monnoye," 1735, and such a translation must have been very useful, for those who wished to read them with ease, though at the risk of losing part of the original humour.

There are several collections in the French language, provincial and otherwise; Hone mentions one in his possession, called "Noels Nouveaux sur les Chants des Noels anciens notez pour en faciliter le chant, par M. l'Abbé Pellegrin," 8vo. Paris, 1785. The tunes of some of the more favourite old Noëls may occasionally be found in collections of popular French airs; and among the chap-books of the day small books of Noëls will be found at a very cheap rate. Besides those already described, I have the following provincial editions. "Nouveaux Cantiques Spirituels Provençeaux," with the music, Avignon, 1750, 12mo. This is not exactly a collection of Noëls, but contains some of that class. "Recueil de Noels Provençaux, composés par le Sieur Peirol, *Menuisier d'Avignon*. Nouvelle edition," Avignon, 1791, 12mo. This contains forty-one, besides six pieces of a different description. They are principally of a light, joyous nature, and contain many ideas similar to those in the English carols; the dialect in all these collections is troublesome to read without a little practice, just as our own Lancashire or Cornish, or other marked dialects would be. "Recueil de Noels Provençaux composés par le Sieur Nicolas Saboly. Nouvelle Edition, aug-

mentée, &c." Avignon, 1807, containing ninety. "Pastorale sur la Naissance de Jesus Christ, &c. Par Frère Claude Macée, Ermite de la province de Saint-Antoine," at the end of which are twenty Noëls, called "Noels Nouveaux," Saint Malo, 1819, 12mo. The same book also contains "La Vie et l'Adoration des trois Rois," and "Le Massacre des Innocens." These, with the "Pastorale," are dramatic performances in the style of the ancient mysteries, and nearly as rude, very probably containing some passages from them in a modernized form. Ruben, one of the shepherds, says, talking of the birth of our Saviour,

> Il devoit naître dans un Louvre,
> Ou dedans un Palais Royal.

In another edition of the "Pastorale," &c. St. Malo, 1805, there is a collection at the commencement, with a separate paging, called "Noels Vieux et Nouveaux," of which the titlepage in my copy is torn off.

But it is time to close this introduction, which has imperceptibly almost, extended to a length that the subject will not sanction. We are apt to think that other persons take as much interest in our hobbies as ourselves, and therefore ride them unsparingly. Not that this has been any particular hobby, but rather an occasional amusement during some visits to the West of England, to collect any carols I could meet with. These gradually accumulated, and it was my intention, a few years since, to have printed a few of the most popular, but this was superseded by Mr. D. Gilbert having about the same time published his first edition. My number however still increasing, and the practice appearing to get more neglected every year, which will hereafter increase the difficulty of obtaining specimens, I

determined to hazard the ensuing selection from a very large number of all descriptions.

The Introduction is merely intended to supply any readers who are desirous of having a little insight into our old Christmas customs, with a slight account of them, without the trouble of referring to those numerous books to which I am myself indebted for the information. It is, what it professes to be, a compilation; and if I have not in all cases stated my authority (*i. e.* where it seemed immaterial to do so), it was to avoid the appearance of citing too many. I will now conclude with the following pleasing description of Christmas, by that great ornament of our age, whose loss we have had so recently to lament.

On Christmas-eve the bells were rung;
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the misletoe.
Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doffed his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner chuse;
The lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of "post and pair."
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.
  The fire with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;

Then the grim boar's-head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baitings of the boar.
The wassol round, in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked: hard by
Plumb-porridge stood, and Christmas pye;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made:
But, O! what masquers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft would cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.*

* Marmion, introd. to Canto vi. 8vo ed. pp. 300–303.

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PART THE FIRST;

CONTAINING

ANCIENT CAROLS AND CHRISTMAS SONGS,

FROM THE EARLY PART OF THE FIFTEENTH TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

A SONG ON THE IVY AND THE HOLLY.

Nay iuy, nay, hyt shall not be, I wys,
Let holy hafe þe maystry as þe maner ys.

Holy stond in þe hall fayre to behold,
Iuy stond wtout þe dore, she ys ful sore a cold.
Nay iuy, &c.
Holy & hys mery men þey dawnsyn & þey syng,
Iuy and hur maydenys þey wepyn & þey wryng.
Nay, &c.
Ivy hath a lyve she laghtyt wt þe colde,
So mot þey all ha fae þt wt jvy hold.
Nay iuy, nay, hyt, &c.

Holy hat berys as rede as any rose,
The foster þe hunters kepe hem fro þe dos.
Nay iuy, nay, hyt, &c.
Iuy hath berys as blake as any slo,
Ther com þe oule & ete hym as she goo.
Nay iuy, nay, hyt, &c.
Holy hath byrdys a ful fayre flok,
The nyghtyngale, þe perpyinguy, þe gayntyl lauyrok.
Nay, &c.
Gode iuy what byrdys ast þ^{u}?
Non but þe howlat þ^{t} kreye how how.
Nay iuy, nay, hyt shal not, &c.

XP̄O PAREMUS CANTICAM EXCELSIS GLĪA.

When cryst was born of mary fre
In bedlem, ī þ^{t} fayre cyte,
Angellis songen w^{t} mirth & gle,
in excelsis głia.
herdmē beheld þ^{s} angellis bryzt
To hem apperyd w^{t} gret lyzt,
and seyd goddis sone is born þ^{s} nyzt,
in excelsis głia.

þᵉ kyng ys comyn to save kynde
. . . . in scriptur as we fynde,
. . . . fore þᵉ song haue we ĩ mynde,
in excelsis glĩa.
. . . . lord for þy gret grace,
. . . . is in blys to se þy face,
Where we may syng to þe solas,
in excelsis glĩa.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Wolcū zol þu mery mã in worchepe of þis holy day,
Wolcū be þu heuene kyng,
Wolcū born in on morwenȳg,
Wolcū for hō we xal syng,
Wolcū zol.
Wolcū be ze stefne & Jon,
Wolcū jnnocetꝛ euſychon,
Wolcū thomas martſon,
Wolcū zol.
Wolcū be ze good newe zer',
Wolcū twelfþe day boþᵉ in fer,
Wolcū seyntꝛ lef & der,
Wolcū zol.

Wolcū be ze candylmesse,
Wolcū be ze qwȳ of blys,
Wolcū boþe to mor & lesse,
Wolcū zol.
Wolcū be ze þ^t arn her,
Wolcū alle & mak good cher,
Wolcū alle ā oþſ zer,
Wolcū zol.

CAROL FOR ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

Seȳt steuene was a clerk ī kȳg herowdℓ halle,
& seruyd hī of bred & cloþ, as euſ kȳg be falle.

Steuȳ out of kechon cā w^t boris hed ō honde,
He saw a sterr' was fayr & bryzt ouſ bedlē stōde;

He kyst a doū þe borℓ hed & went into þe halle,
I for sak þ^e kȳg herowdℓ & þ^i werkℓ alle;

I forsak þ^e kȳg herowdℓ & þ^i werkℓ alle;
þſ is a chyd in bedlē born is beſ þan we alle.

Q^ut eylyt þ^e steuen, q^ut is þ^e be falle?
Lakkyt þ^e eyþſ mete or drynk in kyng herowdℓ halle?

Lakit me neyþꝰ mete ne drynk ī kȳg herowdꝭ halle,
þꝰ is a chyld in bedlē born is betꝰ þā we alle.

Qᵘt eylyt þᵉ steuȳ, art yᵘ wod or yᵘ gȳnyst to brede?
Lakkyt þᵉ eyþꝰ gold or fe, or ony ryche wede?

Lakyt me neyþꝰ gold nor fe, ne nō ryche wede,
þʳ is a chyld in bedlē born xal helpȳ vs at oꝰ nede.

þᵗ is al so soþ, steuȳ, al so soþ, j wys,
As þis capon crowe xal þᵗ lyth her in mȳ dych.

þᵗ word was not so sone seyd, þᵗ word ī þᵗ halle,
þᵉ capon crew xp̄s natꝰ est a mong þᵉ lordꝭ alle.

Rysyt vp mȳ turmētowrꝭ be to & al be on,
& ledᵗ steuȳ out of þis town, & stonᵗ hȳ wᵗ ston.

Tokȳ he steuene & stonyd hȳ in þe way,
& þꝰ for is his euȳ on crystꝭ owȳ day.

EYA JHC HODIE NATUS EST DE VIRGINE.

Blyssid be y^{t} mayde mary,
born he was of her body,
godis sone y^{t} syttit on hy,
nõ ex uirili semine.
In a manjor of an as
Jhu lay & lullyd was,
harde peynis for to pas,
ꝑ peccante homine.
Kyngs comỹ fro dyvesse londe,
W^{t} grete zyfts in þer honde,
In bedlem ye child yey fonde,
Stella ducte lumīe.
Man & chyld bothe eld & ying
Now in his blysful comyng,
to y^{t} chyld now we syng
gła t' dñe.
Nowel, nowel, in yis halle,
Make merye I prey zu alle,
On to y^{t} chyld may we calle,
ullo sine crimine.

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MARY MOD^{a}.

Now el, el, el, el, el, el, el, el, el, el,
Mary was gret w^{t} gab'el.

Mary mod^{r}, meke & mylde,
fro schame & synne þ^{t} z^{e} vs schyllde,
for gret on grownd z^{e} gõ w^{t} childe,
Gab'ele nūcio.
Mary mod^{r}, be not adred,
Jhu is in zo^{r} body bred,
& of zo^{r} bryst he wil be fed,
Cū pudoris lilio.
Mary mod^{r}, þ^{e} frew^{t} of þ^{e}
for vs was naylid on a tre,
in hovene is now his mageste,
fulget jesus rex clo.
Mary mod^{r}, þ^{e} þredde day,
vp he ros as i zow say,
to helle he tok þ^{e} ryzte way,
motu fert^{r} ꝑpo.
Mary mod^{r} aft þis sone,
vp þ^{u}e yis t w^{t} hỹ to wone,
þ^{e} angeł wern glad qñ þ^{u} wer come,
in celi palacõ.

MISSUS EST ANGELUS GABRIEL.

God sent his Aungell Gabriell
  To Nazareth the chefe cite
Of Galile, as Luk will telle,
  To Marie mylde and mayden fre.

The which was weddid to a man
  Of David hows, that Joseph hight;
To her the Aungell entrid than
  And seyde unto that mayden bryght,

Hayl, ful of grace, the Lord of all
  He is with thee, blessyd mote thou be
Among all wymen grete & small;
  Thus salwed he that Lady fre.

When sche this herde sche was affrayede,
  And thought with in hir hert wytly
Of this worde howe it was sayde;
  And than to her he seyde in highe,

Drede nought, Marye, for thou hast founde
  The grace of God in mekenesse trewe;
Thow schalt conseyve and bere a sone,
  And thou schalt clepe his name Jhu.

He schal be grete by godly myght,
  And cleped hys sone that is most hee;
He schal hym gyve by mothir ryght
  The sete of David hys fathir free.

In Jacob hows he schal be kyng,
  And of hys rewme schal be noon ende;
Then askyd Marye of this thing,
  How it schulde be sche wolde be kende,

For man I purpose nevꝯ to knowe;
  Than seyde the Aungell from above
The Holy Gost schal come and schowe
  To thee in the strengthe of love,

And umbischadwe thee with light
  And vꝯtue grete of hys godhede;
Thꝯfore that holy thing of myght
  That schal be born of thee in dede

Schal be Goddis sone, and so be called,
  And so Elizabeth thi awnte
Sche hath conseyved, though sche be olde,
  A sone, suche grace God hath hir graunte.

And now the Sixte moneth is this
  To hir that passed in childe berynge,
To God unmyghty no thing is,
  At hym be may no failyng thinge.

Than spak the mother of pyte,
  Lo the Lordys handmayde I am,
Aft⁄ thi woorde be do to me;
  And at that poynt God bycome man.

Than roos that blissyd mayde Marye,
  And gede up to the hillys with hasty breeth
Unto the hows of Zakarye,
  And salewed ther Elizabeth.

And whan Elizabeth dide her
  The gretyng of that lady swete,
Hir childe Seynt John glad cher than made
  With inne hir wombe ther as sche sete.

And than, fulfilled of the holy Goost,
  Elizabeth bigan to crye
Blessed the art of wymen moost
  So is the fruyt of thi bodye.

And how is this, that thus to me
  Cometh the mothir of my Lord,
To make my childe so welcome thee
  As voys dothe voys in gode acorde?

And blessyd be thou in feith so trewe,
  For what is seyde from God to thee,
By p̄phets alle bothe olde and newe,
  Now is fulfilled, blessyd mote the be.

Than spak Mary, Goddis mothir dere,
  Moche magnifieth my Sowle my Lord,
And so my spirit hath schewed glad cher
  In God my helpe with ful acorde.

This graciouse cowpil of foure in fere,
  Of Crist Jhu and Marye mylde,
Elizabeth and hir sone dere
  Seynt John Baptist, fro schame us schilde.
                Amen.

A, MY DERE SON.

A, my dere son, sayd mary, a, my dere,
kys þ^t moder Jhesu w^t a lawghyng chere.

This endnes nyght I sawe a syght
  all in my slepe,
Mary þ^t may she sang lullay
  & sore did wepe.
To kepe she sawght full fast a bowte
  her son fro colde;
Joseph seyd, wiff, my joy, my leff,
  say what ye wolde;

no thyng my spouse is In þ^{s} howse
unto my pay;
my son a kyng þ^{t} made all thyng
lyth in hay.
A my dere son.

my moder dere, a mend yor chere,
& now be styll;
thus for to ly it is sothely
my fadirs will.
derision gret passion
Infynytely,
as it is fownde many a wownd
suffyr shall I,
on caluery that is so hye
ther shall I be;
man to restore naylid full sore
uppon a tre.
A my dere son.

IN DIE NATIUITATIS.

Meruele nozt, iosep, on Mary mylde;
forsake hyr not they she be w^{t} chylde.
I iosep wonder how this may be,
That mary wex gret when y and she
euer haue leuyd in chastite;
If she be w^{t} chylde, hit ys not by me.
Meruell not, Joseph.
The holy gost w^{t} mercifull disstens
In here hathe entryd w^{t} owte offens,
God and man conceyued by hys p̃sens,
An the virgyn pure w^{t} owte violens.
Meruell no, ioseph.
What the angell of god to me dothe say,
I ioseph muste and will vmble obay,
Ellys ꝑuely y wolde have stole a way,
But now will y srue her tille y^{t} y day.
mũell not, iosep.
Josep, thow shalt her^{e} mayde & moder fynde,
here sone redemptor of all man kynde,
Thy fore faders of paynes to unbynde;
There for muse not this mater in thy mynde.
mũell not.

DE NATIUITATE.

Proface, welcom, well come,
This tyme ys born a chylde of grace,
y^{t} for v^{9} mãkynde hathe take.
proface.
A kyngs sone and an emperoure
ys comyn oute of a maydynys toure,
w^{t} v^{9} to dwelle w^{t} grete honowre.
proface.
This holy tyme of cristsmesse
All sorwe & synne we shulde relese,
And caste away all heuynesse.
ꝑface.
The gode lord of this place entere
Seith welcome to all y^{t} now apere
Vnto suche fare as ye fynde here.
ꝑface.
Well come be this new ere,
And loke ye all be of gode chere,
Oure lorde god be at oure denere.
ꝑface.

DE NATIUITATE.

Jhesu fili virginis
miserere nobis.

Jhesu of a mayde y^{u} woldest be born,
to saue man kynde that was for lorne,
and all for owr synnes:
miserere nobis.
Angelis ther were, mylde of mode,
song to y^{t} swete fode
W^{t} ioye and blisse:
miserere nobis.
In a cratche was y^{t} chyde layde,
bothe oxe & asse w^{t} hym playde,
w^{t} ioye & blisse:
miserere nobis.
Then for v^{o} he shadde his blode,
& allso he dyedde on ye rode,
and for v^{o} y wysse:
miserere nobis.
And then to helle he toke the way
to raunson him y^{t} ther lay,
w^{t} ioy & blisse:
miserere nobis.

IN DIE NATIVITATIS.

Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
Tydyngꝗ gode y thyngke to telle.

The borys hede that we bryng here
Be tokeneth a p²nce with owte pere,
Ys born' this day to bye v⁹ dere,
Nowell.

A bore ys a souerayn beste,
And acceptable in euꝗ feste,
So mote thys lord be to moste & leste,
Nowell.

This borys hede we bryng wᵗ song
In worchyp of hym that thus sprang
Of a virgyne to redresse all wrong,
Nowell.

IN DIE NATIVITATIS.

Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell.
Who ys there that syngith so nowell, nowell?

I am here, syre cristsmasse;
Well come, my lord s^{r} c^{r}stsmasse,
Welcome to vs all bothe more & lasse,
Com ner, nowell.
Dievs wous garde, brewe s^{rs}, tydȳgℓ y zow bryng,
A mayde hath born a chylde full zong,
The weche causeth zew for to syng,
Nowell.
Criste is now born of a pure mayde,
In an oxe stalle he ys layde,
Wher'for syng we alle atte abrayde,
Nowell.
Bevvex bien par tutte la company,
Make gode chere & be ryght mery,
And syng w^{t} vs now ioyfully,
Nowell.

DE INNOCENTIBUS.

Worchepe we this holy day,
y^{t} all innocentis for vs pray.

Herode y^{t} was both wylde & wode,
ful muche he shadde of cristen blode,
To sle y^{t} chylde so meke of mode
that mary bare, y^{t} clene may.

Mary w^{t} iħu forthe yfrawzt,
As the angell hur towzt
To flee the londe till h^{t} wer' sowzt,
To epytte she toke hure way.

Herode sloo w^{t} pryde & synne
Thowsands of ij zer' & w^{t} ynne,
The body of criste he thozft to wynne,
& to destrye the cristen fay.

Now iħu y^{t} dyest for vs on the rode,
And c^{s}stendest innocents in his blode,
By the p̃yer of thy moder gode,
Bryng v^{9} to blysse y^{t} lastith ay.

A CAROLL
BRINGYNG IN THE BORES HEED.

Caput afri differo
Reddens 'laudes' domino.

The bores heed in hand bring I,
With garlans gay and rosemary,
I pray you all synge merely
Qui estis in convivio.

The bores heed, I vnderstande,
Is the 'chefe' seruyce in this lande;
Loke, where euer it be fande,
Seruite cum cantico.

Be gladde lordes, bothe more and lasse,
For this hath ordeyned our stewarde
To chere you all this Christmasse,
The bores heed with mustarde.

IN BETHELEEM.

Be we mery in this feste,
In quo saluator natus est.

In Betheleem, that noble place,
As by prophesy sayd it was,
Of the vyrgyn Mary, full of grace,
  Saluator mundi natus est.
                Be we mery, &c.
On chrystmas nyght an angel it tolde
To the shephardes, kepyng theyr folde,
That into Betheleem with bestes wolde,
  Saluator mundi natus est.
                Be we mery, &c.
The shephardes were cōpassed ryght,
About them was a great lyght,
Drede ye nought, sayd the aūgell bryght,
  Saluator mundi natus est.
                Be we mery, &c.
Beholde to you we brynge great ioy,
For why, Jesus is borne this day
(To vs) of Mary, that mylde may,
  Saluator mundi natus est.
                Be mery, &c.

And thus in fayth fynde it ye shall,
Lyenge porely in an oxe stall.
The shephardes than lauded god all,
  Quia Saluator mundi natus est.
                Be mery, &c.

A NEW CAROLL OF OUR LADY.

  Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
  This sayd the aungell Gabryell.

Lordes and ladyes all by dene,
  For your goodnes and honour
I wyll you synge all of a quene,
  Of all women she is the floure.
                Nowell, &c.
Of Jesse there sprange a wyght,
  Isay sayd by prophesy,
Of whome shall com a man of myght,
  From dethe to lyfe he wyll vs bye.
                Nowell, &c.
There cam an aungell bryght of face,
  Flyenge from heuen with full gret lyght,
And sayd, Hayle! Mary, full of grace,
  For thou shalt bere a man of myght.
                Nowell, &c.

Astonyd was that lady free,
  And had meruayle of that gretynge,
Aungell, she sayd, how may that be,
  For neuer of man I had knowynge?
Nowell, &c.

Drede the nothynge, Mary mylde,
  Thou art fulfylled with great vertew,
Thou shalt conceyue and bere a chylde,
  That shall be named swete Jesu.
Nowell, &c.

She knelyd downe vpon her knee,
As thou haste sayd, so may it be,
With hert, thought, and mylde chere,
Goddes handmayd I am here.
Nowell, &c.

Than began her wombe to sprynge,
  She went with chylde without man,
He that is lorde ouer all thynge,
  His flesshe and blode of her had than.
Nowell, &c.

Of her was borne our heuen kynge,
  And she a mayden neuer the lesse,
Therfore be mery, and let vs synge,
  For this new lorde of Chrystmas.
Nowell, Nowell, &c.

A CAROLL OF THE INNOCENTES.

Marke this songe, for it is trewe,
  For it is trewe, as clerkes tell:
In olde tyme straūg thyngs cam to pas,
Grete wonder and grete meruayll was
  In Israell.
There was one Octauyan,
  Octauyan of Rome Emperour,
As bokes olde doth specyfye,
Of all the wyde worlde trulye
  He was lorde and gouernour.

The Jewes that tyme lackyd a kyng,
  They lackyd a kyng to gyde them well,
The Emperour of power and myght
Chose one Herode agaynst all ryght
  In Israell.
This Herode thā was kyng of Jewys,
  Was kyng of Jewys, and he no Jewe,
Forsothe he was a Panym borne,
Wherfore on fayth it may be sworne
  He reygned kynge vntrewe.

By prophesye one Isay,
  One Isay at lest dyd tell,
A chylde sholde come, wōderous newys,
That shold be borne trewe kyng of Jewys
  In Israell.
This Herode knew one borne shold be,
  One borne sholde be of trewe lenage,
That sholde be ryght herytour;
For he but by the Emperour
  Was made by vsurpage.

Wherfore of throught this kyng Herode,
  This kynge Herode in grete fere fell,
For all the days most in his myrth,
Euer he fered Chrystes byrth
  In Israell.
The tyme came it pleased God,
  It pleased God so to come to pas,
For mannes soule in dede
His blyssed sone was borne wyth spede,
  As his wyll was.

Tydynges came to kynge Herode,
  To kynge Herode, and dyd hym tell,
That one borne forsoth is he,
Whiche lorde and kynge of all shall be
  In Israell.

Herode thā raged as he were woode,
  As he were wode of this tydynge,
And sent for all his scrybes sure,
Yet wolde he not trust the scrypture,
  Nor of theyr councellynge.

Than this was the conclusyon,
  The conclusyon of his councell,
To sende vnto his knyghtes anone
To sle the chylderne euerychone
  In Israell.
This cruell kynge this tyranny,
  This tyranny dyd put in vre,
Bytwene a day and yeres too
All men chylderne he dyd sloo,
  Of Cryst for to be sure.

Yet Herode myssed his cruell pray,
  His cruell pray, as was goddes wyll,
Joseph with Mary than dyd fle,
With Chryst to Egypt gone was she,
  From Israell.
All this whyle this tyrantes,
  This tyrantes wolde not cōuert,
But innocentes yonge
That lay sokynge,
  They thryst to the herte.

This Herode sought the chyldren,
  This chyldren yonge, with corage fell,
But in doynge thys vengeaunce
His owne sone was slayne by chaunce
  In Israell.
Alas! I thynke the moders were wo,
  The moders were wo, it was grete skyl,
What motherly payne
To se them slayne;
  In cradels lyeng styll!

But God him selfe hath theym electe,
  Hath theym electe, in heuyn to dwell,
For they were bathed in theyr blode,
For theyr baptym forsoth it stode
  In Israell.
Alas! agayne what hartes had they,
  What harts had they those babes to kyll;
With swerdes whan they hym caught,
In cradels they lay and laught,
  And neuer thought yll.

SONG OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Followis ane Sang of the birth of Christ, with the Tune of Baw lulalaw.

I come from heuin to tell
The best nowellis that euer be fell,
To yow thir tythinges trew I bring,
And I will of them say and sing.

This day to yow is borne ane childe,
Of Marie meike and Virgine mylde;
That blissit barne, bining and kynde,
Sall yow rejoyce baith heart and mynd.

It is the Lord Christ, God and man,
Hee will doe for you quhat hee can;
Himselfe your Sauiour hee will bee,
Fra sinne and hell to make zow free.

Hee is our richt saluation
From euerlasting damnation,
That ze may ring in gloir and blis,
For euer mair in heuin with his.

Ze sall him find but marke or wring,
Full sempill in ane cribe lying;

So lyis hee quhilk zow hes wrocht,
And all this warld made of nocht.

Let vs rejoyce and bee blyth,
And with the hyrdes goe full swyth,
And see quhat God of his grace hes don
Throw Christ to bring vs to his throne.

My saull and lyfe, stand vp and see
Quha lyes in ane cribe of tree;
Quhat babe is that so gude and faire?
It is Christ, Gods Sonne and Aire.

Welcum now, gracious God of mycht,
To sinners vyle, pure and vnricht;
Thou come to saue vs from distresse,
How can wee thank thy gentilnesse?

O God that made all creature,
How art thow becum so pure,
That on the hay and stray will lye,
Amang the asses, oxin and kye?

And were the warld ten tymes so wide,
Cled ouer with gold and stanes of pride,
Unworthy zit it were to thee,
Under thy feit ane stule to bee.

The sylke and sandell, thee to eis,
Are hay and sempill sweiling clais,
Quhairin thow gloiris, greitest King,
As thow in heuin were in thy ring.

Thow tuke like paines temporall,
To make me riche perpetuall:
For all this warldis welth and gude,
Can nothing richt thy celsitude.

O my deir hert, zoung Jesus sweit,
Prepare thy creddill in my spreit,
And I sall rocke thee in my hert,
And neuer mair from thee depart.

But I sall praise thee euermoir,
With sangs sweit vnto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert sall I bow,
And sing that richt Balulalow.

Gloir bee to God eternally,
Quhilk gaif his only Sonne for mee,
The angels joyes for to heir,
The gratious gift of this new zeir.

Finis.

NOW LET VS SING.

Now let vs sing with joy and mirth,
In honour of the Lord's birth,
For his loue and humanitie,
Quha gaue him sell for vs to die.

By Adame wee were all forlorne,
Bot now Christ Jesus to vs borne,
Hes fred vs from captiuitie,
And vincust hes our enemie.

When hee was borne, nane did him snib,
To lye right law intill ane crabe:
Ane oxe, ane asse, right tenderly,
Refreshit his humanity.

His godheid misters no support,
For it was full of all comfort;
Whilke equall is in all degree
Unto his Father's majestie.

The angells sang with mirrinesse
Unto the hyrdes more and lesse,
And bade them of gude comfort bee,
For Christes new natiuitie.

For yee were all at Gods horne;
This Babe to you that now is borne,
Sall make you saif, and for you die,
And you restore to libertie.

This Babe for you did shed his blude,
And tholed dead vpon the rude;
And for his great humanitie,
Exalltit is his majestie.

And now hee is our Aduocat,
Prayand for vs baith aire and late:
This can the Scripture verifie,
In sa far as ane man is hee.

Therefore all tyme, tyde, and houre,
Passe vnto him as Mediatour
Betwixt his Fathers wrath and vs,
Of sinne gif thou will clangit bee.

For hee hes promeist with his hert,
To all sinners that will reuert,
And from their sinfull life will flie,
Sall ring with him eternallie.

To God the Father mot bee glore,
And als to Christ for euermore,
The Haly Ghaist mot blessed bee,
Worker of this natiuitie. Finis.

AN OLD CAROL, WITH LULLABY.

1. Lulla, la lulla, lulla lullaby,
My sweet little babie, what meanest thou to cry?
Bee still, my blessed babe, though cause thou hast to mourne,
Whose bloud most innocent the cruell king hath sworne:
And lo, alas, behold, what slaughter he doth make,
Shedding the blood of infants all, sweet Saviour, for thy sake:
A king is borne, they say, which king this king would kill,
Oh woe, and woeful heauy day, when wretches haue their will.

2. Lulla, &c.
Three kings this king of kings to see, are come from farre,
To each unknowen, with offerings great, by guiding of a starre:
And shepheards heard the song, which angells bright did sing,
Giuing all glory vnto God, for comming of this king,
Which must be made away, King Herod would him kill,
Oh woe, and woful heauie day, when wretches have their will.

3. Lulla, &c.

Loe, my little babe, bee still, lament no more,
From furie shalt thou step aside, help have wee still in store;
Wee heauenly warning have, some other soyle to seeke,
From death must flie the lord of life, as lamb both mild and meeke:
Thus must my babe obey the king that would him kill,
Oh woe, and wofull heauie day, when wretches haue their will.

4. Lulla, &c.

But thou shalt liue and reigne, as Sibilles have foresayd,
As all the prophets prophesie, whose mother, yet a maide,
And perfect virgin pure, with her brestes shall vpbreede
Both God and man that all hath made, the sonne of heauenly seede:
Whom caytiues none can traye, whom tyrants none can kill,
Oh ioy, and ioyfull happie day, when wretches want their will.

FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

Immortal Babe, who this dear day
Didst change thine Heaven for our clay,
And didst with flesh thy godhead veil,
Eternal Son of God, all hail!

Shine, happy star; ye angels, sing
Glory on high to Heaven's King:
Run, shepherds, leave your nightly watch,
See Heaven come down to Bethlehem's cratch.

Worship, ye sages of the east,
The King of gods in meanness dress'd.
O blessed maid, smile and adore
The God thy womb and arms have bore.

Star, angels, shepherds, and wild sages,
Thou virgin glory of all ages,
Restored frame of Heaven and Earth,
Joy in your dear Redeemer's birth!

THE SHEPHEARD'S SONG:

A CAROLL OR HIMNE FOR CHRISTMAS.

Sweet Musicke, sweeter farre
Then any song is sweet:
Sweet Musicke heauenly rare,
Mine eares, O peeres, doth greete.
Yon gentle flocks, whose fleeces, pearl'd with dewe,
Resemble heaven, whom golden drops make bright:
Listen, O listen, now, O not to you
Our pipes make sport to shorten wearie night.
But voyces most diuine
Make blissfull harmonie:
Voyces that seeme to shine,
For what else cleares the skie?
Tunes can we heare, but not the singers see,
The tunes diuine, and so the singers be.

Loe how the firmament
Within an azure fold
The flock of starres hath pent,
That we might them behold.
Yet from their beames proceedeth not this light,
Nor can their christals such reflection giue.
What then doth make the element so bright?
The heauens are come downe vpon earth to liue.

But harken to the song,
Glory to glories king,
And peace all men among,
These queristers doe sing.
Angels they are, as also (Shepheards) hee
Whom in our feare we doe admire to see.

Let not amazement blinde
Your soules, said he, annoy:
To you and all mankinde
My message bringeth ioy.
For loe the world's great Shepheard now is borne,
A blessed babe, an infant full of power:
After long night, vp-risen is the morne,
Renowning Bethlem in the Sauiour.
Sprung is the perfect day,
By prophets seene a farre:
Sprung is the mirthfull May,
Which Winter cannot marre.
In Dauid's citie doth this sunne appeare:
Clouded in flesh, yet Shepheards sit we here.

Finis. E. B.

CAROL

ON BRINGING BOAR'S HEAD, USED BEFORE CHRISTMAS PRINCE, AT ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S COLLEGE, OXFORD, CHRISTMAS, 1607.

1. The Boare is dead,
Loe, heare is his head,
What man could haue done more
Then his head of to strike,
Meleager like,
And bringe it as I doe before?

2. He liuinge spoyled
Where good men toyled,
Which made kinde Ceres sorrye;
But now, dead and drawne,
Is very good brawne,
And wee haue brought it for y^{u}.

3. Then sett downe ye Swineyard,
The foe to ye Vineyard,
Lett Bacchus crowne his fall,
Lett this Boares-head and mustard
Stand for Pigg, Goose, and Custard,
And so y^{a} are welcome all.

AN HYMN
ON THE NATIVITY OF MY SAVIOUR.

I sing the birth was born to-night,
The author both of life and light;
  The angels so did sound it.
And like the ravish'd shepherds said,
Who saw the light, and were afraid,
  Yet search'd, and true they found it.

The Son of God, th' eternal king,
That did us all salvation bring,
  And freed the soul from danger;
He whom the whole world could not take,
The Word, which heaven and earth did make,
  Was now laid in a manger.

The Father's wisdom will'd it so,
The Son's obedience knew no No,
  Both wills were in one stature;
And as that wisdom had decreed,
The Word was now made flesh indeed,
  And took on him our nature.

What comfort by him do we win,
Who made himself the price of sin,
  To make us heirs of glory!
To see this babe, all innocence;
A martyr born in our defence:
  Can man forget the story?

TWELFE NIGHT,

OR KING AND QUEENE.

  Now, now the mirth comes,
  With the cake full of plums,
Where beane's the king of the sport here;
  Beside we must know,
  The pea also
Must revell as queene in the court here.

  Begin then to chuse,
  This night as ye use,
Who shall for the present delight here;
  Be a king by the lot,
  And who shall not
Be Twelfe-day queene for the night here.

Which knowne, let us make
Joy-sops with the cake;
And let not a man then be seen here
Who unurg'd will not drinke,
To the base from the brink,
A health to the king and the queene here.

Next crowne the bowle full
With gentle lambs-wooll;
Adde sugar, nutmeg, and ginger,
With store of ale too;
And thus ye must doe
To make the wassaile a swinger.

Give then to the king
And queene wassailing,
And though with ale ye be whet here,
Yet part ye from hence,
As free from offence,
As when ye innocent met here.

AN ODE
OF THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR.

In numbers, and but these few,
I sing thy birth, oh Jesu!
Thou prettie Babie, borne here,
With sup'rabundant scorn here;
Who for thy princely port here,
Hadst for thy place
Of birth, a base
Out-stable for thy court here.

Instead of neat inclosures
Of interwoven osiers;
Instead of fragrant posies
Of daffadills and roses,
Thy cradle, kingly stranger,
As gospell tells,
Was nothing els,
But, here, a homely manger.

But we with silks, not cruells,
With sundry precious jewells,
And lilly-work will dresse thee;
And as we dispossesse thee

Of clouts, wee 'l make a chamber,
Sweet babe, for thee,
Of ivorie,
And plaister'd round with amber.

The Jewes, they did disdaine thee;
But we will entertaine thee
With glories to await here
Upon thy princely state here,
And more for love then pittie;
From yeere to yeere
Wee 'll make thee, here,
A free-born of our citie.

THE STAR-SONG;

A CAROLL TO THE KING. SUNG AT WHITEHALL.

The flourish of musick; then followed the song.

1. Tell us, thou cleere and heavenly tongue,
Where is the Babe but lately sprung?
Lies he the lillie-banks among?

2. Or say, if this new Birth of ours
Sleeps, laid within some ark of flowers,
Spangled with deaw-light; thou canst cleere
All doubts, and manifest the where.

3. Declare to us, bright star, if we shall seek
Him in the morning's blushing cheek,
Or search the beds of spices through,
To find him out?

Star. No, this ye need not do;
But only come and see Him rest,
A princely Babe, in's mother's brest.

Chor. He's seen! He's seen! why then around
Let's kisse the sweet and holy ground;
And all rejoyce that we have found
A King, before conception, crown'd.

4. Come then, come then, and let us bring
Unto our prettie twelfth-tide King,
Each one his severall offering.

Chor. And when night comes wee'l give him wassailing;
And that his treble honours may be seen,
Wee'l chuse him King, and make his mother Queen.

THE WASSAILE.

Give way, give way, ye gates, and win
An easie blessing to your bin
And basket, by our entring in.

May both with manchet stand repleat,
Your larders, too, so hung with meat,
That thou a thousand, thousand eat.

Yet ere twelve moones shall whirl about
Their silv'rie spheres, ther's none may doubt
But more's sent in then was serv'd out.

Next, may your dairies prosper so,
As that your pans no ebbe may know ;
But if they do, the more to flow.

Like to a solemne sober stream,
Bankt all with lillies, and the cream
Of sweetest cowslips filling them.

Then may your plants be prest with fruit,
Nor bee or hive you have be mute,
But sweetly sounding like a lute.

Next, may your duck and teeming hen
Both to the cocks-tread say, Amen;
And for their two egs render ten.

Last, may your harrows, shares, and ploughes,
Your stacks, your stocks, your sweetest mowes,
All prosper by your virgin-vowes.

Alas! we blesse, but see none here
That brings us either ale or beere;
In a drie-house all things are neere.

Let 's leave a longer time to wait,
Where rust and cobwebs bind the gate;
And all live here with needy fate;

Where chimneys do for ever weepe,
For want of warmth, and stomachs keepe
With noise the servants eyes from sleep.

It is in vain to sing, or stay
Our free feet here, but we 'l away;
Yet to the lares this we 'l say:

The time will come, when you 'l be sad,
And reckon this for fortune bad,
T'ave lost the good ye might have had.

A CHRISTMAS CARROL.

BY GEORGE WITHER.

So, now is come our joyfulst feast;
  Let every man be jolly;
Each room with ivy leaves is drest,
  And every post with holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine,
Round your foreheads garlands twine;
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
  And let us all be merry.

Now, all our neighbours' chimnies smoke,
  And Christmas blocks are burning;
Their ovens they with bak'd meats choke,
  And all their spits are turning.
Without the door let sorrow lye;
And if for cold it hap to die,
We'll bury't in a Christmas pie,
  And ever more be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,
  And no man minds his labour;
Our lasses have provided them
  A bag-pipe and a tabor;

Young men and maids, and girls and boys,
Give life to one another's joys;
And you anon shall by their noise
  Perceive that they are merry.

Rank misers now do sparing shun;
  Their hall of music soundeth;
And dogs thence with whole shoulders run,
  So all things there aboundeth.
The country folks themselves advance
With crowdy-muttons out of France;
And Jack shall pipe, and Jyll shall dance,
  And all the town be merry.

Ned Squash hath fetcht his bands from pawn,
  And all his best apparel;
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn
  With dropping of the barrel;
And those that hardly all the year
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear,
Will have both clothes and dainty fare,
  And all the day be merry.

Now poor men to the justices
  With capons make their errants;
And if they hap to fail of these,
  They plague them with their warrants:

But now they feed them with good cheer,
And what they want they take in beer;
For Christmas comes but once a year,
  And then they shall be merry.

Good farmers in the country nurse
  The poor, that else were undone;
Some landlords spend their money worse,
  On lust and pride at London.
There the roysters they do play,
Drab and dice their lands away,
Which may be ours another day;
  And therefore let's be merry.

The client now his suit forbears,
  The prisoner's heart is eased;
The debtor drinks away his cares,
  And for the time is pleased.
Though other purses be more fat,
Why should we pine or grieve at that?
Hang sorrow! care will kill a cat,
  And therefore let's be merry.

Hark! how the wags abroad do call
  Each other forth to rambling:
Anon you'll see them in the hall
  For nuts and apples scrambling.

Hark! how the roofs with laughter sound!
Anon they'll think the house goes round;
For they the cellars depth have found,
  And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassel bowls
  About the streets are singing;
The boys are come to catch the owls,
  The wild mare in is bringing.
Our kitchen-boy hath broke his box,
And to the dealing of the ox
Our honest neighbours come by flocks,
  And here they will be merry.

Now kings and queens poor sheep cotes have,
  And mate with every body;
The honest now may play the knave,
  And wise men play the noddy.
Some youths will now a mumming go,
Some others play at Rowland-ho,
And twenty other gameboys mo,
  Because they will be merry.

Then wherefore in these merry daies
  Should we, I pray, be duller?
No, let us sing some roundelayes,
  To make our mirth the fuller.

And, whilst thus inspir'd we sing,
Let all the streets with echoes ring,
Woods and hills, and every thing,
Bear witness we are merry.

A CARROL FOR A WASSEL-BOWL,

To be sung upon Twelfth-Day at Night, to the tune of "Gallants, come away."

A jolly wassel-bowl,
A wassel of good ale,
Well fare the butler's soul,
That setteth this to sale;
Our jolly wassel.

Good dame, here at your door
Our wassel we begin,
We are all maidens poor,
We pray now let us in,
With our wassel.

Our wassel we do fill
With apples and with spice,
Then grant us your good will
To taste here once or twice
Of our good wassel.

If any maidens be
  Here dwelling in this house,
They kindly will agree
  To take a full carouse
    Of our wassel.

But here they let us stand
  All freezing in the cold:
Good master, give command
  To enter and be bold,
    With our wassel.

Much joy into this hall
  With us is entred in;
Our master, first of all,
  We hope will now begin
    Of our wassel.

And after his good wife
  Our spiced bowl will try;
The Lord prolong your life,
  Good fortune we espy
    For our wassel.

Some bounty from your hands,
  Our wassel to maintain:
We 'l buy no house nor lands
  With that which we do gain
    With our wassel.

This is our merry night
  Of choosing king and queen,
Then be it your delight
  That something may be seen
    In our wassel.

It is a noble part
  To bear a liberal mind;
God bless our master's heart,
  For here we comfort find,
    With our wassel.

And now we must be gone
  To seek out more good cheer,
Where bounty will be shown,
  As we have found it here,
    With our wassel.

Much joy betide them all,
  Our prayers shall be still,
We hope and ever shall,
  For this your great good will
    To our wassel.

OLD CHRISTMAS RETURNED,

OR, HOSPITALITY REVIVED;

Being a Looking-glass for rich Misers, wherein they may see (if they be not blind) how much they are to blame for their penurious house-keeping, and likewise an encouragement to those noble-minded gentry, who lay out a great part of their estates in hospitality, relieving such persons as have need thereof:

> "Who feasts the poor, a true reward shall find,
> Or helps the old, the feeble, lame, and blind."

To the tune of "The Delights of the Bottle."

All you that to feasting and mirth are inclin'd,
Come here is good news for to pleasure your mind,
Old Christmas is come for to keep open house,
He scorns to be guilty of starving a mouse:
Then come, boys, and welcome for diet the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

A long time together he hath been forgot,
They scarce could afford for to hang on the pot;
Such miserly sneaking in England hath been,
As by our forefathers ne'er us'd to be seen;
But now he's returned you shall have in brief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

The times were ne'er good since Old Christmas was fled,
And all hospitality hath been so dead,
No mirth at our festivals late did appear,
They scarcely would part with a cup of March beer;
But now you shall have for the ease of your grief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

The butler and baker, they now may be glad,
The times they are mended, though they have been bad;
The brewer, he likewise may be of good cheer,
He shall have good trading for ale and strong beer;
All trades shall be jolly, and have for relief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

The holly and ivy about the walls wind,
And show that we ought to our neighbours be kind,
Inviting each other for pastime and sport,
And where we best fare, there we most do resort;
We fail not of victuals, and that of the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

The cooks shall be busied by day and by night,
In roasting and boiling, for taste and delight;

Their senses in liquor that 's nappy they 'll steep,
Though they be afforded to have little sleep;
They still are employed for to dress us in brief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

Although the cold weather doth hunger provoke,
'Tis a comfort to see how the chimneys do smoke;
Provision is making for beer, ale, and wine,
For all that are willing or ready to dine:
Then haste to the kitchen, for diet the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

All travellers, as they do pass on their way,
At gentlemen's halls are invited to stay,
Themselves to refresh, and their horses to rest,
Since that he must be Old Christmas's guest;
Nay, the poor shall not want, but have for relief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

Now Mock-beggar-hall it no more shall stand empty,
But all shall be furnisht with freedom and plenty;
The hoarding old misers, who us'd to preserve
The gold in their coffers, and see the poor starve,
Must now spread their tables, and give them in brief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

The court, and the city, and country are glad,
Old Christmas is come to cheer up the sad;
Broad pieces and guineas about now shall fly,
And hundreds be losers by cogging a die,
Whilst others are feasting with diet the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

Those that have no coin at the cards for to play,
May sit by the fire, and pass time away,
And drink of their moisture contented and free,
" My honest good fellow, come, here is to thee!"
And when they are hungry, fall to their relief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

Young gallants and ladies shall foot it along,
Each room in the house to the musick shall throng,
Whilst jolly carouses about they shall pass,
And each country swain trip about with his lass;
Meantime goes the caterer to fetch in the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-
beef.

The cooks and the scullion, who toil in their frocks,
Their hopes do depend upon their Christmas box;
There is very few that do live on the earth
But enjoy at this time either profit or mirth;

Yea those that are charged to find all relief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

Then well may we welcome Old Christmas to town,
Who brings us good cheer, and good liquor so brown;
To pass the cold winter away with delight,
We feast it all day, and we frolick all night;
Both hunger and cold we keep out with relief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

Then let all curmudgeons, who dote on their wealth,
And value their treasure much more than their health,
Go hang themselves up, if they will be so kind;
Old Christmas with them but small welcome shall find;
They will not afford to themselves without grief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minc'd pies, and roast-beef.

JOYIS FYVE.

I may synge of a may of joyis fyve & inþis most.

þ^{e} ferste joye as i zu telle
w^{t} mary met seynt Gab'elle,
heyl mary i grete þ^{e} welle,
w^{t} fad^{r} & sone & holy gost.
þ^{e} secn̄de joye b̲ in good fay
was on crystemesse day,
born he was of a may,
w^{t} fad^{r}, &c. &c.
þ^{e} þredde joye, w^{t}outỹ stryf,
þ^{t} blysseful berþ^{e} was ful ryf,
qñ he ros fro ded to lyf,
w^{t} fad^{r}, &c. &c.
þ^{e} forte joye w^{t} out in good fay,
was upon halewỹ þursda,
he stey to hevene in ryche aray,
w^{t} fad^{r} & sone & holy gost.
þ^{e} fyfte joye w^{t} outỹ dene,
in hevene he crownyd his mod^{r} clene,
þ^{t} was wol wil þ^{e} ey^{r} a sene,
w^{t} fad^{r}, &c. &c.

A NEW DYALL.

1. One God, one Baptisme, and one Fayth,
   One Truth there is, the Scripture sayth.

2. Two Testaments (the Old and New)
   Wee doe acknowledge to be true.

3. Three Persons are in Trinitie,
   Which make One God in Unitie.

4. Foure sweet Euangelists there are,
   Christs birth, life, death which doe declare.

5. Fiue Sences (like Fiue Kings) maintaine
   In euery Man a seuerall reigne.

6. Six dayes to labour, is not wrong,
   For God himselfe did worke so long.

7. Seuen Liberall Arts hath God sent downe,
   With Diuine skil Mans Soule to crowne.

8. Eight in Noahs Arke alive were found,
   When (in a word) the World lay drownd.

9. Nine Muses (like the heauens nine Spheares)
   With sacred Tunes intice our eares.

10. Ten Statutes God to Moyses gaue,
Which kept or broke, doe spill or saue.

11. Eleuen with Christ in Heauen doe dwell,
The Twelfth for euer burnes in Hell.

12. Twelue are attending on Gods Sonne,
Twelue make our creede. The Dyall's done.

Count one the first houre of thy Birth,
The houres that follow, leade to Earth:
Count Twelue thy dolefull striking knell,
And then thy Dyall shall goe well.

PART THE SECOND;

CONTAINING

A SELECTION FROM CAROLS

STILL USED IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND.

A VIRGIN MOST PURE.

A Virgin most pure, as the Prophets do tell,
Hath brought forth a Babe, as it hath befell,
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,
Which by Adam's transgression hath wrapt us all in.
Rejoice, and be you merry, set sorrow aside,
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born on this tide.

In Bethlehem city, in Jury it was,
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,
And there to be taxed, with many one more,
For Cæsar commanded the same should be so.
Rejoice and be you merry, &c.
But, when they had entered the city so far,
The number of people so mighty was there,
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,
Could get in the city no lodging at all.
Rejoice, &c.

Then they were constrained in a stable to lie,
Where oxen and asses they used to tie;
Their lodging so simple, they held it no scorn,
But against the next morning our Saviour was born.
Rejoice, &c.

The King of all Glory to the world being brought,
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was brought;
When Mary had swaddled her young Son so sweet,
Within an ox manger she laid him to sleep.
Rejoice, &c.

Then God sent an Angel from heaven so high,
To certain poor Shepherds in fields where they lie,
And bid them no longer in sorrow to stay,
Because that our Saviour was born on this day.
Rejoice, &c.

Then presently after, the Shepherds did spy
A number of Angels appear in the sky,
Who joyfully talked, and sweetly did sing,
To God be all Glory, our Heavenly King.
Rejoice, &c.

Three certain Wise Princes, they thought it most meet
To lay their rich offerings at our Saviour's feet;
Then the Shepherds consented, and to Bethlehem did go,
And when they came thither, they found it was so.
Rejoice, &c.

A CHILD THIS DAY IS BORN.

A Child this day is born,
A Child of high renown,
Most worthy of a sceptre,
A sceptre and a crown.
Novels, Novels, Novels,
Novels, sing all we may,
Because the King of all Kings
Was born this blessed day.

The which the holy Prophets
Spake of long time before,
That from the fall of Adam
He should us all restore.
Novels, &c.
This Child both God and Man
From Heaven down to us came,
He is the King of all Kings,
And Jesus is his name.
Novels, &c.
These tidings Shepherds heard
In field watching their fold,
Was by an Angel unto them
That night reveal'd and told.
Novels, &c.

Who standing near by them
  To them shined so bright,
That they amazed were
  At that most glorious sight.
                Novels, &c.
To whom the Angel spoke,
  Saying, Be not afraid,
Be glad, poor silly Shepherds;
  Why are you so dismayed?
                Novels, &c.
For lo, I bring you tidings
  Of gladness and of mirth,
Which cometh to all people by
  This Holy Infant's birth.
                Novels, &c.
Him hath God lifted up
  As light and shepherd's horn,
Which in the city of David
  This present time was born.
                Novels, &c.
The only Son of God was he
  The Lord and God most Highest;
And he is the true Shepherd,
  The young child Jesus Christ.
                Novels, &c.
Then was there with the Angel
  An Host incontinent
Of heavenly bright soldiers,
  Which from the Highest was sent.
                Novels, &c.

Lauding the Lord our God,
  And his Celestial King;
All Glory be in Paradise,
  This heavenly Host did sing.
                Novels, &c.
Glory be unto our God,
  That sitteth still on high,
With praises and with triumph great,
  And joyful melody.
                Novels, &c.
But when this holy Army
  Of heavenly soldiers bright
Was unto God returned
  And vanish'd out of sight;
                Novels, &c.
The Shepherds hearts joyful
  At this great glorious news,
That the King of all Kings
  Was risen amongst the Jews,
                Novels, &c.
Without the least of hinderance
  Anon they went in then,
And found the young child Jesus Christ
  Thus born in Bethlehem.
                Novels, &c.
And as the Angel told them,
  So to them did appear;
They found the young child Jesus Christ,
  With Mary his Mother dear.
                Novels, &c.

Now such a place it was
  Where this was come to pass,
For want of room this Child was laid
  Betwixt an ox and ass.
                Novels, &c.
Not sumptuously, but simply
  Was this young King array'd,
A manger was the cradle
  Where this young Child was laid.
                Novels, &c.
No prid at all was found
  In this most holy Child,
But he being void of all sin
  The Lamb of God most mild.
                Novels, &c.
His body unto bitter pains
  He gave to set us free:
He is our Saviour Jesus Christ,
  And none but only he.
                Novels, &c.
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
  All glory be therefore,
To whom be all dominion
  Both now and evermore.
                Novels, &c.

FOR CHRISTMAS EVE.

The Lord at first had Adam made
  Out of the dust and clay;
And in his nostrils breathed life,
  E'en as the Scriptures say;
And then in Eden's Paradise
  He placed him to dwell,
That he within it should remain,
  To dress, and keep it well.
    Now let good Christians all begin
      An holy life to live,
    And to rejoice and merry be,
      For this is Christmas Eve.

And thus within the garden he
  Commanded was to stay;
And unto him in commandment
  These words the Lord did say:
The fruit that in the garden grows
  To thee shall be for meat,
Except the tree in the midst thereof,
  Of which thou shalt not eat.
                Now let good, &c.
For in that day thou dost it touch,
  Or dost it then come nigh,

And if that thou dost eat thereof,
  Then thou shalt surely die.
But Adam he did take no heed
  To that same only thing,
But did transgress God's holy laws,
  And sore was wrapp'd in sin.
                Now let good, &c.
Now mark the goodness of the Lord,
  Which he to mankind bore;
His mercy soon he did extend
  Lost man for to restore;
And then, for to redeem our souls
  From death, and hell, and thrall,
He said his own dear Son should come
  The Saviour of us all.
                Now let good, &c.
Which promise now is brought to pass,
  Christians believe it well,
And by the coming of God's Son
  We are redeem'd from Hell.
And if we truly do believe,
  And do the thing that's right,
Then by his merits we at last
  Shall live in Heaven bright.
                Now let good, &c.
Now, for the benefits that we
  Enjoy from Heaven above,
Let us renounce all wickedness,
  And live in perfect love.

Then shall we do Christ's own command,
Even his written word,
And when we die, in Heaven we shall
Enjoy our living Lord.
Now let good, &c.
And now the tide is nigh at hand
In which our Saviour came;
Let us rejoice and merry be
In keeping of the same.
Let 's feed the poor and hungry sort,
And such as do it crave;
And when we die, in Heaven be sure
Our reward we shall have.
Now let good, &c.

THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM GOD.

The Angel Gabriel from God
Was sent to Galilee,
Unto a Virgin fair and free,
Whose name was called Mary.
And when the Angel thither came,
He fell down on his knee,
And looking up in the Virgin's face,
He said, All hail, Mary.

Then, sing we all, both great and small,
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell;
We may rejoice to hear the voice
Of the Angel Gabriel.

Mary anon looked him upon,
And said, Sir, what are ye?
I marvel much at these tidings
Which thou hast brought to me.
Married I am unto an old man,
As the lot fell unto me;
Therefore, I pray depart away,
For I stand in doubt of thee.
Then, sing, &c.
Mary, he said, be not afraid,
But do believe in me:
The power of the Holy Ghost
Shall overshadow thee;
Thou shalt conceive without any grief,
As the Lord told unto me;
God's own dear Son from Heaven shall come,
And shall be born of thee.
Then, sing, &c.
This came to pass as God's will was,
Even as the Angel told.
About midnight an Angel bright
Came to the Shepherds fold,
And told them then both where and when
Born was the child our Lord,

And all along this was their song,
All Glory be given to God.
Then sing, &c.
Good people all, both great and small,
The which do hear my voice,
With one accord let's praise the Lord,
And in our hearts rejoice;
Like sister and brother, let's love one another
Whilst we our lives do spend,
Whilst we have space let's pray for grace,
And so let my carol end.
Then, sing, &c.

WHEN RIGHTEOUS JOSEPH WEDDED.

When righteous Joseph wedded was
To Israel's Hebrew maid,
A glorious Angel from Heaven came,
Who to the Virgin said:
Hail, blessed Mary, full of grace,
The Lord remain with thee,
Thou shalt conceive and bear a Son,
Our Saviour for to be.

Sing we all, both great and small,
Noel, Noel, Noel,
We may rejoice to hear the voice
Of the Angel Gabriel.

It's wondrous strange, quoth Mary then,
I should conceive and breed,
Being never touched by mortal man,
But pure in thought and deed.
Fear not, quoth Gabriel by and by,
It is no work of man,
But was ordain'd by God at first
Before the world began.
Sing, &c.
This Heavenly message she believed,
And did to Jury go,
Three months there with her friends to stay,
God's blessed will to know;
And then returned to Joseph back,
Her husband meek and mild,
Who thought it strange his wife should be
Untouch'd thus gone with child.
Sing, &c.
Then sought he for to shun that shame,
He thought her to forsake,
But that God's Angel in his sleep
To him thus did relate:

Fear not, just Joseph, this thy wife
  Is still a spotless maid,
And no consent to sin, quoth he,
  Against her can be laid.
Sing, &c.
For she is pure both maid and wife,
  And Mother of God's own Heir,
The Babe of Heaven, and blessed Lamb,
  Of Israel's flocks so fair,
To save lost sheep from Satan's fold,
  Whom Adam lost by fraud,
When first in Eden Paradise
  The Lord had on him bestowed.
Sing, &c.
Sing praises all, both old and young,
  To him who wrought such things,
And that without the help of man
  Sent us the King of Kings;
Who is of such commanding power,
  That by his Word can quell
The world, the flesh, and by his death
  Hath conquer'd Death and Hell.
Sing, &c.

FOR CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE MORNING.

The first Nowell the Angel did say
Was to three poor Shepherds in the fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
In a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a Star
Shining in the East beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, &c.
And by the light of that same Star,
Three Wise Men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the Star wherever it went.
Nowell, &c.
This Star drew nigh to the North West,
O'er Bethlehem it took it's rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, &c.
Then did they know assuredly
Within that house the King did lie;

One entered in then for to see,
And found the Babe in poverty.

Nowell, &c.

Then enter'd in those Wise Men three
Most reverently upon their knee,
And offer'd there in his presence,
Both gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Nowell, &c.

Between an ox stall and an ass,
This Child truly there born he was;
For want of clothing they did him lay
All in the manger, among the hay.

Nowell, &c.

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his blood mankind hath bought.

Nowell, &c.

If we in our time shall do well,
We shall be free from death and Hell,
For God hath prepared for us all
A resting place in general.

Nowell, &c.

WHEN CÆSAR AUGUSTUS.

When Cæsar Augustus had rais'd a taxation,
He assest all the people that dwelt in the nation;
The Jews at that time being under Rome's sway
Appear'd in the city their tribute to pay;
When Joseph and Mary, who from David did spring,
Went up to the city of David their King,
And there being enter'd cold welcome they find,
From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

They sought entertainment, but none could they find,
Great numbers of strangers had filled the inn;
They knocked and called all this at the door,
But found not a friend where kind they had store;
Their kindred accounted they were come too soon,
Too late, said the innkeeper, here is no room.
Amongst strangers and kinsfolk cold welcome they find,
From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

Good Joseph was troubled, but most for his dear,
For her blessed burden whose time now drew near;
His heart with true sorrow was sorely afflicted
That his Virgin Spouse was so rudely neglected;

He could get no houseroom, who houses did frame,
But Joseph and Mary must go as they came;
For little is the favour the poor man can find,
From the rich to the poor they are mostly unkind.

Whilst the great and the wealthy do frolic in hall,
Possess all the groundrooms and chambers and all;
Whilst Joseph and Mary thrust into a stable
In Bethlehem city, ground inhospitable;
And with their mean lodging contented they be,
For the minds of the just with their fortunes agree,
They bear all affronts with their meekness of mind,
And be not offended tho' the rich be unkind.

No sooner was man betray'd into evil,
By the subtilty of Old Satan the Devil,
But God made a promise that the woman's seed,
In Jury now born, should bruise Satan's head.
O Bethlehem, Bethlehem, welcome this stranger
That was born in a stable and laid in a manger,
For he is a Physician to heal all our smarts—
Come welcome sweet Jesus, and lodge in our hearts.

JOSEPH BEING AN AGED MAN.

Joseph being an aged man truly,
He married a Virgin fair and free,
A purer Virgin could no man see
  Than he chose for his wife and dearest dear.

The Virgin was pure there was no nay,
The Angel Gabriel to her did say,
Thou shalt conceive a Child this day,
  The which shall be our dearest dear.

The Angel no sooner this message said
But all in heart she was afraid;
How may this be, and I a pure maid?
  Say then to me, my dearest dear.

The Holy Ghost, Mary, shall come unto thee,
The power of it shall overshadow thee,
And thou shalt bear a Son truly,
  The which shall be our dearest dear.

Joseph being a perfect mild man,
Perceiving that Mary with child was gone,
Said, Tell to me, Mary, and do not frown,
  Who hath done this, my dearest dear?

Then answered Mary meek and mild:
I know no Father unto my Child
But the Holy Ghost, and I undefiled,
  That hath done this, my dearest dear.

But Joseph thinking her most unjust,
Yielding her body to unlawful lust,
Out of his house he thought for to thrust
  His own true love, his dearest dear.

But whilst in heart he thought the same,
The Angel Gabriel to him came,
As he lay sleeping on a frame,
  Still dreaming on his dearest dear.

Who said, Fear not to take to thee
Thy true and faithful wife Mary;
Most true and faithful is she to thee,
  Then turn not away thy dearest dear.

When Joseph arose from his sleep so sound,
His love to Mary did more abound,
He would not for ten thousand pound
  Forsake his love and dearest dear.

They lived both in joy and bliss,
But now a strict commandment is,
In Jury land no man should miss
  To go along with his dearest dear,

Unto the place where he was born,
Unto the Emperor to be sworn,
To pay a tribute that is duly known,
  Both for himself and his dearest dear.

And when they were to Bethlehem come,
The inns were filled both all and some,
For Joseph entreated them every one,
  But could get no bed for his dearest dear.

Then were they constrained presently
Within a stable all night to lie,
Where they did oxen and asses tie
  With his true love and his dearest dear.

The Virgin pure thought it no scorn
To lie in such a place forlorn,
But against the next morning our Saviour was
      born,
  Even Jesus Christ, our dearest dear.

The King of all power in Bethlehem born,
Who wore for our sakes a crown of thorn ;
Then God preserve us both even and morn,
  For Jesus' sake, our dearest dear.

WHEN AUGUSTUS CÆSAR.

When Augustus Cæsar throughout
  All the world had made peace,
He in Jury for his pleasure,
  His revenues to increase,
A tax did set on great and small,
  Both men and women to return,
The same to pay without delay,
  Unto the town where they were born.

When aged Joseph with his Mary,
  Cæsar's precepts to fulfil,
After many a weary journey
  Came to Bethlehem with good will,
To pay their due, with obedience too,
  Unto the prince that they were sworn,
Whilst they were there, our Saviour dear,
  To set us free, that time was born.

Blessed Mary, though a Virgin,
  Yet a wife, and great with child,
Weary of her blessed burden,
  Did intreat with speeches mild

In every inn, but could not win
  A lodging, thus was left forlorn
In wofull state with her dear mate,
  Yet there our Saviour Christ was born.

So that at last they were constrained
  In a stable to be laid,
Her humble bed she not refused,
  But implored Heaven's aid;
She meekly was with ox and ass
  Accompanied, yet took no scorn;
No midwife's aid to help her staid,
  Yet there our Saviour Christ was born.

No ornaments, nor robes of honour
  Had this King of Kings to dress him;
No princely train in sumptuous manner
  Came their services to press him:
No musick sweet did rock to sleep
  This princely Child upon that morn,
But his dear Mother, and no other
  Present was when he was born.

No cradle had our blessed Saviour,
  Yet was Lord of Heaven and Earth,
Like a poor distressed stranger
  He receives a beggar's birth.

Yet Angels bright with glorious light
  Adorn'd the sky that blessed morn,
And there proclaim'd the glorious name
  Of the bless'd babe that there was born.

To certain Shepherds they appeared
  Who were feeding of their sheep,
To whom with happy news returned
  Before the blessed day did break,
O go, said they, without delay,
  To Bethlehem this instant morn,
And there proclaim the glorious name
  Of Jesus Christ, in stable born.

The Shepherds did no longer tarry
  In the fields their flocks to fold,
But ran to Bethlehem, where sweet Mary
  With her babe they did behold.
What joy was then made by those men,
  Till time and all things be out worn,
Let us all make e'en for his sake,
  Who on this blessed day was born.

ALL YOU THAT ARE TO MIRTH INCLINED.

All you that are to mirth inclin'd,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us hath done
In sending his beloved Son.
  And to redeem our souls from thrall,
  He is the Saviour of us all.

Let all your songs and praises be
Unto his Heavenly Majesty,
And evermore among your mirth
Remember Christ our Saviour's birth.
  And to redeem, &c.
The five and twentieth of December,
Good cause have you for to remember,
In Bethlehem upon this morn
There was our blessed Saviour born.
  And to redeem, &c.
The night before that happy tide
The spotless Virgin, and her guide,
Went long time seeking up and down,
To find them lodging in the town.
  And to redeem, &c.
And mark how all things came to pass,
The inns and lodgings so filled was,

That they could have no room at all,
But in a silly oxes stall.
And to redeem, &c.
That night the Virgin Mary mild
Was safe delivered of a Child,
According unto Heaven's decree
Man's sweet salvation for to be.
And to redeem, &c.
Near Bethlehem did Shepherds keep
Their herds and flocks, and feeding sheep,
To whom God's Angels did appear,
Which put the Shepherds in great fear.
And to redeem, &c.
Prepare and go, the Angel said,
To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
There shall you see this blessed morn,
The princely babe, sweet Jesus, born.
And to redeem, &c.
With thankful hearts and joyful mind,
The Shepherds went this Babe to find,
And as the heavenly Angel told,
They did our Saviour Christ behold.
And to redeem, &c.
Within a manger was he laid,
The Virgin Mary by him stay'd,
Attending on the Lord of life,
Being both mother, maid, and wife.
And to redeem, &c.

Three Eastern Wise Men from afar,
Directed by a glorious Star,
Came boldly on, and made no stay
Until they came where Jesus lay.
And to redeem, &c.

And being come unto the place
Wherein the blest Messias was,
They humbly laid before his feet
Their gifts of gold and odours sweet.
And to redeem, &c.

See how the Lord of Heaven and Earth
Shew'd himself lowly in his birth,
A sweet example for mankind,
To learn to bear an humble mind.
And to redeem, &c.

No costly robes or rich attire
Did Jesus Christ our Lord desire,
No musick nor sweet harmony,
Till glorious Angels came from high.
And to redeem, &c.

If choirs of Angels did rejoice,
Well may mankind with heart and voice
Sing praises to the God of Heaven,
That unto us his Son is given.
And to redeem, &c.

THIS NEW CHRISTMAS CARROL.

This new Christmas carrol
  Let us chearfully sing,
To the honor and glory
  Of our Heavenly King,
Who was born of a Virgin,
  Blessed Mary by name,
For poor sinners' redemption
  To the world here he came.

The mighty Jehovah
  By the prophets foretold,
That the sweet babe of Heaven
  Mortal eyes should behold.
Both King, Prince, and Prophet
  Nay, our Saviour beside,
Let his name through all ages
  Ever be glorified.

Now, when Joseph and Mary
  Was espoused, we find,
Having seen her condition,
  He was grieved in mind

Aye, and thought to dismiss her
  Whom he loved so dear;
But an Angel from Heaven
  Did her innocence clear.

He declared in a vision,
  That a Son she should have,
By the Father appointed
  Fallen mortals to save;
And the same should be called
  Blessed Jesus by name:
From the high court of Heaven
  This ambassador came.

Then the righteous man Joseph
  He believed the news,
And the sweet Virgin Mary
  He did no wise refuse.
Thus the blest amongst women,
  She did bear and bring forth
A sweet Prince of Salvation
  Both in Heaven and Earth.

When the days of her travail
  Did begin to draw nigh,
Righteous Joseph and Mary
  They immediately

To the city of David,
  To be taxed indeed,
E'en as Cæsar Augustus
  Had firmly decreed.

Being come to the city,
  Entertainment they craved,
But the inns were so filled
  They no lodging could have;
For the birth of our Saviour,
  Tho' he was Prince of all,
He could have there no place
  But a poor oxes stall.

Now the proud may come hither,
  And perfectly see
The most excellent pattern
  Of humility;
For instead of a cradle,
  Deckt with ornaments gay,
Here the great King of Glory
  In a manger he lay.

As the Shepherds were feeding
  Of their flocks in the field,
The sweet birth of our Saviour
  Unto them was reveal'd,

By blest Angels of Glory,
  Who those tidings did bring,
And directed the Shepherds
  To their Heavenly King.

When the Wise Men discover'd
  This bright heavenly Star,
Then with gold and rich spices
  Straight they came from afar,
In obedience to worship
  With a heavenly mind,
Knowing that he was born
  For the good of mankind.

Let us learn of those sages,
  Who were wise, to obey;
Nay, we find through all ages
  They have honour'd this day,
Ever since our Redeemer's
  Bless'd nativity,
Who was born of a Virgin
  To set sinners free.

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR HAVING BROUGHT.

Augustus Cæsar having brought
  The world to quiet peace,
That all the noise of bloody wars
  In every land did cease;
Just Joseph, with his Mary mild,
  To Bethlehem did come,
Which blessed place appointed was
  To ease her burden'd womb.
    O sing we all, with heart and voice,
      Let Christian love increase,
    For unto us this day is born
      The only Prince of Peace.

Then, all the town being full of guests,
  Such was their helpless case,
That not a bed for them was left,
  Nor any lodging place;
But in a poor and simple inn,
  Even an ox's stall
Appointed was to entertain
  The Saviour of us all.
    O sing, &c.
No mantle, nor no rich attire,
  No swaddling bands, nor linen rare,
No costly robes, nor golden treasure,
  Could Jesus Christ our Lord have there.

No other nurse nor lullaby,
  But blessed Mary's arms,
To rock this blessed babe to sleep,
  With heavenly hymns and charms.
                O sing, &c.
Thus was the Son of God not born
  In majesty and state,
As Princes of the Nations be,
  Tho' he a Prince most great:
Yet at his blessed birth the choirs
  Of heavenly Angels sing,
And every thing for Jury's King
  Rejoiced with thanksgiving.
                O sing, &c.
O Holy, Holy, Lord of Hosts,
  This was their joy and mirth,
Which sounded out on every coast,
  For Jesus Christ his birth.
Both Cherubim, and Seraphim,
  With all the Hosts of Heaven,
With joyful voice sang praises forth,
    To glorify this even.
                O sing, &c.
And when that blessed morning came
  That God's dear Son was born,
A glorious Star with blazing beams
  Did all the skies adorn,

Which unto Shepherds in the fields
  The first of all appear'd ;
A voice likewise came down from Heaven,
  And thus the Shepherds cheer'd.
                O sing, &c.
This tide is born in Bethlehem
  A Saviour, and a King,
Whose merits shall redeem the world,
  And man's salvation bring.
All glory be to God on high,
  And peace on Earth to all,
And goodwill still be unto men,
  This was the Angel's call.
                O sing, &c.
This Star did not alone appear
  Unto the Shepherds poor,
But to the sages of the world,
  To make their glory more ;
Who came conducted by the Star,
  From countries far from thence,
And there presented at his feet,
  Gold, myrrh, and frankincense.
                O sing, &c.
The which when cruel Herod heard,
  Of this great homage done,
By the three Wise Men of the East,
  To Mary's blessed Son ;

He sent throughout all Jury land
  To have this infant slain,
With every one of two years old,
  And none did there remain.
                O sing, &c.
Then Bethlehem grew red with blood,
  And white with infants' bones,
That nought was heard in Jury's land
  But childless mothers' moans.
Yet Mary's babe, by Heaven preserv'd,
  Escaped their bloody rage,
And liv'd in Egypt, till he came
  To the term of twelve years age.
                O sing, &c.
Even as the Angel did appoint,
  His parents did back return,
And with their Son in Jury's land
  In safety did sojourn.
But Herod's death by judgment strange
  Before the time befell,
Whose bowells brake and did burst out,
  As ancient stories tell.
                O sing, &c.
Then Jesus Christ, at twelve years old,
  In Jury began to preach,
And to the sages of the land
  Of Moses' laws did teach;

And afterwards for twenty years
He oft did fast and pray,
Till cursed Judas with a kiss
Sweet Jesus did betray.

O sing, &c.

WHEN GOD AT FIRST CREATED MAN.

When God at first created man
His image for to be,
And how he fram'd him by his power
In Scripture we may see;
And how he made his help meet Eve,
The Scripture doth us tell;
Being free from sin, God plac'd them both
In Paradise to dwell.
Let men therefore then praise the Lord,
Rejoice, and cease to mourn,
Because our Saviour Jesus Christ
On Christmas day was born.

Man being entered in this place,
We plainly understand
The glory of it, having seen
God gave them this command:

Be sure thou eat not of the tree
  Which in the midst doth stand;
In eating it thou sure shalt die
  And perish from the land.
Let men, &c.

Man being blest in this estate,
  And blessed sure was he,
Having all things at his command
  But the forbidden Tree.
But when the Serpent soon appear'd
  To have beguiled Eve,
And told her if she eat thereof
  That she should surely live.
Let men, &c.

The Serpent soon had Eve beguiled
  That she thereof did eat,
And likewise gave unto the man
  As Scripture doth repeat.
And so they both brake God's command,
  Committing of that thing,
Likewise the heavy wrath of God
  Upon them both did bring.
Let men, &c.

An Angel then from God was sent
  For to declare his will,
And to the Virgin Mary came,
  God's word for to fulfil.

A Virgin sure of life most pure,
  The Lord of her made choice
To bear our Saviour in her womb
  Men's hearts for to rejoice.
                Let men, &c.
The Angel then before her stood,
  Declaring of those things,
And told her that she should conceive
  And bear the King of Kings,
To save men's souls from Hell beneath
  From which we could not fly,
For breaking of the Lord's command
  Condemn'd he was to die.
                Let men, &c.
Mary replied, 'Tis wond'rous strange
  To hear what thou hast said,
I should conceive, being free from sin
  And still a spotless maid.
The Angel said, 'Tis not by man
  That this shall come to pass,
But was ordain'd by God at first
  Before the world e'er was.
                Let men, &c.
This glorious Angel she believ'd
  That did those tidings bring,
And then sang praises in her heart
  To God our Heavenly King.

Then God he knew her faith was such
  For to believe aright;
The Angel then by God's own power
  Departed from her sight.
Let men, &c.

Then Cæsar made a firm decree
  That certainly should stand,
That all the world should taxed be
  By power of his command:
Mary then being great with child
  When Cæsar made this call,
For in her womb was then conceiv'd
  The Saviour of us all.
Let men, &c.

Thus Mary and her husband kind
  Together did remain,
And went to Bethlehem to be tax'd,
  As Scripture doth make plain.
And so it was, they being there,
  Her time being fully come,
That in a stable she brought forth
  Her first begotten Son.
Let men, &c.

These tidings to the Shepherds came,
  Watching their flocks by night,
For God he sent his Angel down,
  Which did them sore affright.

The Angel said, Fear not of me,
  But shew these things abroad,
For unto you this day is born
  A Saviour, Christ the Lord.
                Let men, &c.
God grant us hearts for to believe,
  And rightly to consider,
How that our Saviour suffered death
  Our souls for to deliver.
The which if rightly we believe,
  We shall with him be blest,
And when this mortal life is o'er
  In Heaven we hope to rest.
                Let men, &c.

COME REJOICE, ALL GOOD CHRISTIANS.

Come rejoice, all good Christians,
  And rejoice now, I pray,
For joy our Redeemer
  Was born on this day,
In the city of David,
  And a cottage so poor:
Then rejoice and be you merry,
  We have blessings in store.

And therefore be you merry,
Rejoice and be you merry,
Set sorrows away,
Christ Jesus our Saviour
Was born on this day.

Our Lord he was born
Of a Virgin most pure,
Within a poor stable
Both safe and secure.
He was guarded most safely
With Angels so bright,
Who told three poor Shepherds
Those things in the night.
And therefore, &c.
They said, Be not fearful,
But to Bethlehem go:
Then rejoice and be chearful,
For 'tis certainly so.
For a young Son to Joseph
Is in Bethlehem born:
Then rejoice, all good Christians,
And cease for to mourn.
And therefore, &c.
And when those three Shepherds
Did to Bethlehem come,
And arrived at the stable,
Then in they did run,

Where they found blessed Mary
  With Jesus her Son:
There they found our Lord sleeping,
  And thus they begun.
                And therefore, &c.
With the sweetest Hallelujah
  The Heavens did rejoice,
With the Saints and the Angels,
  And all with sweet voice,
Crying Glory and honour
  To our Heavenly King,
In the clouds of the air
  Then this Host they did sing.
                And therefore, &c.
Then well may we Christians,
  That dwell on the earth,
Rejoice and be glad
  For sweet Jesus his birth,
Who brought us salvation,
  If we mind but the same:
Then let all in the nation
  Sing praise to his name.
                And therefore, &c.
With true zeal and honour
  Let us joyfully sing,
In praise of our salvation,
  To our Heavenly King;

To our Heavenly Father,
That remaineth above,
And to our dear Saviour,
That redeem'd us with love.
And therefore, &c.

GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN.

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born on
Christmas day.

In Bethlehem in Jury
This blessed babe was born,
And laid within a manger
Upon this blessed morn;
The which his mother Mary
Nothing did take in scorn.
O tidings, &c.

From God our Heavenly Father
  A blessed Angel came,
And unto certain Shepherds
  Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
  The Son of God by name.
O tidings, &c.

Fear not, then said the Angel,
  Let nothing you affright,
This day is born a Saviour
  Of virtue, power, and might;
So frequently to vanquish all
  The friends of Satan quite.
O tidings, &c.

The Shepherds at those tidings
  Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a feeding
  In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
  This blessed babe to find.
O tidings, &c.

But when to Bethlehem they came,
  Whereas this infant lay,
They found him in a manger
  Where oxen feed on hay,
His mother Mary kneeling
  Unto the Lord did pray.
O tidings, &c.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface.
O tidings, &c.

WHEN ADAM FIRST IN PARADISE.

When Adam first in Paradise
From God's presence did fly,
For eating the forbidden fruit
Condemned was to die,
And by that fall fell mankind all,
Till God in mercy said,
His own dear Son should man become,
And Justice should be paid.
To save us all from sin and thrall
When we were left forlorn,
All men on earth rejoice with mirth,
For Christ this tide was born.

And when fullness of time was come,
According to Heav'n's decree,
A glorious Angel was sent down
To the Virgin Mary.

A virgin sure of mind most pure
  And holy life was she ;
With those words sweet he did her greet,
  All hail, Mary, quoth he.
                To save us all, &c.
Thou that art highly in esteem,
  Know this and understand,
Thou shalt conceive and bear a Son,
  Redemption is at hand.
Be not afraid, thou beauteous maid,
  Nor doubt how this can be ;
The Holy Ghost with power most
  Shall overshadow thee.
                To save us all, &c.
The blessed Mary did believe,
  And then these words spake she,
Behold the handmaid of the Lord,
  So be it unto me.
And at the last it came to pass,
  Her time being fully come,
Within a stable she brought forth
  Her first begotten Son.
                To save us all, &c.
And now let neighbours all rejoice
  Together when they meet,
Let 's praise the Lord with heart and voice,
  With love each other greet.

Neighbours in old times did rejoice,
  And feast on this blest tide;
The times never knew these fashions new
  Old customs to deride.
To save us all, &c.
Now in your mirth abandon vile
  Licentious debauchery,
For these are things that will defile
  Your Christian liberty.
Feed well the hungry, clothe the poor,
  And such as stand in need:
This is the way to celebrate
  A true Christmas indeed.
To save us all, &c.

REMEMBER, O THOU MAN.

Remember, O thou Man,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
Remember, O thou Man,
  Thy time is spent.
Remember, O thou Man,
How thou camest to me then,
And I did what I can,
  Therefore repent.

Remember Adam's fall,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
Remember Adam's fall
    From Heaven to Hell.
Remember Adam's fall,
How we were condemned all
To Hell perpetual,
    There for to dwell.

Remember God's goodness,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
Remember God's goodness
    And promise made.
Remember God's goodness,
How his only Son he sent
Our sins for to redress,
    Be not afraid.

The Angels all did sing,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
The Angels all did sing
    On Sion hill.
The Angels all did sing
Praises to our Heavenly King,
And peace to man living,
    With right good will.

The Shepherds amazed was,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
The Shepherds amazed was
To hear the Angels sing.
The Shepherds amazed was
How this should come to pass,
That Christ our Messias
Should be our King.

To Bethlehem did they go,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
To Bethlehem did they go
This thing to see.
To Bethlehem did they go
To see whether it was so,
Whether Christ was born or no,
To set us free.

As the Angels before did say,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
As the Angels before did say,
So it came to pass.
As the Angels before did say,
They found him wrapt in hay
In a manger where he lay,
So poor he was.

In Bethlehem was he born,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
In Bethlehem was he born
For mankind dear.
In Bethlehem was he born
For us that were forlorn,
And therefore took no scorn
Our sins to bear.

In a manger laid he was,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
In a manger laid he was
At this time present.
In a manger laid he was,
Between an ox and an ass,
And all for our trespass,
Therefore repent.

Give thanks to God always,
O thou Man, O thou Man,
Give thanks to God always
With hearts most jolly.
Give thanks to God always
Upon this blessed day,
Let all men sing and say,
Holy, Holy.

TO-MORROW SHALL BE MY DANCING DAY.

To-morrow shall be my dancing day,
I would my true love did so chance
To see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance.
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a Virgin pure,
Of her I took fleshly substance;
Thus was I knit to man's nature,
To call my true love to my dance.
Sing, oh! &c.
In a manger laid and wrapp'd I was,
So very poor, this was my chance,
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,
To call my true love to my dance.
Sing, oh! &c.
Then afterwards baptized I was,
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,
My Father's voice heard from above,
To call my true love to my dance.
Sing, oh! &c.

Into the desert I was led,
  Where I fasted without substance;
The Devil bade me make stones my bread,
  To have me break my true love's dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.
The Jews on me they made great suit,
  And with me made great variance,
Because they lov'd darkness rather than light,
  To call my true love to my dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.
For thirty pence Judas me sold,
  His covetousness for to advance;
Mark whom I kiss, the same do hold,
  The same is he shall lead the dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.
Before Pilate the Jews me brought,
  Where Barabbas had deliverance,
They scourg'd me and set me at nought,
  Judged me to die to lead the dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.
Then on the cross hanged I was,
  Where a spear to my heart did glance;
There issued forth both water and blood,
  To call my true love to my dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.
Then down to Hell I took my way
  For my true love's deliverance,
And rose again on the third day
  Up to my true love and the dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.

Then up to Heaven I did ascend,
  Where now I dwell in sure substance,
On the right hand of God, that man
  May come unto the general dance.
                Sing, oh! &c.

I SAW THREE SHIPS.

I saw three ships come sailing in
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
I saw three ships come sailing in
  On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day?
And what was in those ships all three,
  On Christmas day in the morning?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

Pray whither sailed those ships all three,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day?
Pray whither sailed those ships all three,
  On Christmas day in the morning?

O they sailed into Bethlehem,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
O they sailed into Bethlehem,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth shall ring,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
And all the bells on earth shall ring,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the Souls on Earth shall sing,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
And all the Souls on Earth shall sing,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

Then let us all rejoice amain,
  On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
Then let us all rejoice amain,
  On Christmas day in the morning.

WHEN OLD FATHER JACOB.

When old Father Jacob was ready to die,
He call'd for his twelve sons whereas he did lie,
And by inspiration of power divine
He told them their fortune, as God did design.
  And therefore be merry,
    The joys of all Angels and Saints let us sing,
  For the birth of our Saviour,
    Priest, Prophet, and King.

Reuben, my first born and eldest art thou,
The strength of my loins, and son of my vow,
But since thou with incest my bed hast defiled,
This day from thy birthright I have thee exil'd.
And therefore, &c.
Judah, thou ordain'd unto that title art,
From whom law and sceptre shall never depart,
Until that Christ come whom the people shall serve,
Who by his own merits the world shall preserve.
And therefore, &c.
Moses, that excellent prophet and clerk,
Confirmeth the saying of this patriarch;
For shewing that God in his likeness would raise
A prophet to Israel in the latter days.
And therefore, &c.

With whom all the prophets in witness agree,
As by the Old Testament plain you may see,
That on a pure Virgin this thing shall be done,
That God here on earth would have born him a son.
And therefore, &c.

And as holy Angels in the heavenly choir,
With infinite carols and music intire,
To join in one concert let some time be spent,
To fill with Hosannas earth and firmament.
And therefore, &c.

Let all the Lord's people accompany me
To worship one Godhead, tho' in persons three;
And now we have found one our loss to repair,
With joy welcome Christmas, and banish despair,
And therefore, &c.

THE SAVIOUR OF ALL PEOPLE.

God bless the master of this house,
And all that are therein,
And to begin this Christmas tide
With mirth now let us sing.
For the Saviour of all people
Upon this time was born,
Who did from death deliver us,
When we were left forlorn

Then let us all most merry be,
  And sing with chearful voice,
For we have good occasion now
  This time for to rejoice.
For, &c.

Then put away contention all,
  And fall no more at strife,
Let every man with chearfulness
  Embrace his loving wife.
For, &c.

With plenteous food your houses store,
  Provide some wholesome cheer,
And call your friends together
  That live both far and near.
For, &c.

Then let us all most merry be,
  Since that we are come here,
And we do hope before we part
  To taste some of your beer.
For, &c.

Your beer, your beer, your Christmas beer,
  That seems to be sc strong,
And we do wish that Christmas tide
  Was twenty times so long.
For, &c.

Then sing with voices chearfully,
  For Christ this time was born,
Who did from death deliver us,
  When we were left forlorn.
For, &c.

UPON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Upon Christmas day in the morning,
Upon Christmas day in the morning,
O then was born our Heavenly King:
Good Lord, was not this a joyful thing?
  Sweet Jesus is his name.
    The babe was born in Bethlehem,
    The babe was born in Bethlehem,
    All the world rejoice and sing,
      Sweet Jesus is his name.

Upon New Year's day in the morning,
Upon New Year's day in the morning,
O then was circumcis'd our Heavenly King:
Good Lord, was not this a joyful thing?
  Sweet Jesus is his name.
    The babe was born, &c.
Upon Candlemas day in the morning,
Upon Candlemas day in the morning,
Our blessed Lady kept her purifying:
Good Lord, was not this a joyful thing?
  Sweet Jesus is his name.
    The babe was born, &c.
Upon Shrove Sunday in the morning,
Upon Shrove Sunday in the morning,

The Jews held counsel 'gainst our Heavenly King:
Good Lord, was not this a sorrowful thing?
Sweet Jesus is his name.
The babe was born, &c.

Upon Good Friday in the morning,
Upon Good Friday in the morning,
The Jews put to death our Heavenly King:
Good Lord, was not this a woful thing?
Sweet Jesus is his name.
The babe was born, &c.

O let us rejoice amain,
O let us rejoice amain,
Although he suffer'd bitter pain,
Upon the third day he rose again:
Sweet Jesus is his name.
The babe was born, &c.

Upon Easter day in the morning,
Upon Easter day in the morning,
Then arose from death our Heavenly King:
Good Lord, was not this a joyful thing?
Sweet Jesus is his name.
The babe was born, &c.

Then into Heaven ascended he,
Then into Heaven ascended he,
There to live with God in glory,
With whom God send us all to be:
Sweet Jesus is his name.
The babe was born, &c.

THE VIRGIN MOTHER.

Come behold the Virgin Mother
  Fondly leaning on her child,
Nature shews not such another,
  Glorious, holy, meek, and mild:
Bethlehem's antient walls enclose him,
  Dwelling place of David once;
Now no friendly homesteed knows him,
  Tho' the noblest of his sons.

Many a prophecy before him
  Publish'd his bright advent long,
Guardian Angels low adore him
  In a joyous heavenly song;
Eastern Sages see with wonder
  His bright Star illume the sky,
O'er the volumes old they ponder,
  Volumes of dark prophecy.

Royal Bethlehem how deserted,
  All his pomp and splendor lost;
Is a stable, vile and dirty,
  All the welcome you can boast?

Far they travel, oft inquiring
  Where the wondrous babe is born:
On they came with great desiring,
  Although others treat with scorn.

See, a babe of days and weakness
  Heaven's Almighty now appears,
Liable to death and sickness,
  Shame and agony and tears.
Sovereign he and great Creator,
  He who form'd the heav'ns and earth,
Yet takes on him human nature,
  Angels wonder at his birth.

Why, ah, why this condescension,
  God with mortal man to dwell?
Why lay by his grand pretension,
  He who does all thrones excell?
'Tis to be a man, a brother,
  With us sinners of mankind:
Vain we search for such another,
  Ne'er we love like this shall find.

'Tis to make himself an offering
  As a pure atoning lamb,
Souls redeeming by his suffering,
  That in human flesh he came;

As a God he could not suffer,
  He a body true must have;
As a man what he might offer
  Could not satisfy or save.

Tho' an infant now you view him,
  He shall fill his Father's throne,
Gather all the Nations to him;
  Every knee shall then bow down:
Foes shall at his presence tremble,
  Great and small, and quick and dead,
None can fly, none dare dissemble,
  None find where to hide his head.

Friends! Oh then in chearful voices
  They shall shout with glad acclaim,
While each rising saint rejoices,
  Saints of high or lowest fame.
Then what different appearing
  We 'mong mortal tribes shall find;
Groaning those who now are sneering,
  Triumphing the humble mind.

May we now, that day forestalling,
  Hear the word, and read and pray,
Listen to the Gospel calling,
  And with humble heart obey.

Give us hearty true repentance,
Live in faith and holiness;
Then we need not fear thy sentence,
But may trust thy saving grace.
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah,
Praise the Lord.

GLORIA TIBI DOMINE.

There is a Child born of our blessed Virgin;
I heard a Maid lullaby to sing:
Peace, my dear Child, of thy weeping,
For thou shalt be our Heavenly King.
Now sing we, and now sing we,
To the Gloria tibi Domine.

O Mother! O Mother! your wishes are nought;
It is not for me such carols are wrought;
Such carols were never by woman thought
To the Gloria tibi Domine.
Now sing we, &c.
O my dear Son, why sayest thou so?
Thou art my Son, I have no moe;
When Gabriel begot thee, full of grace,
Thou needest not tell me of this case.
Now sing we, &c.

O, they will thrust, Mother, my head from my hair,
With a crown of thorns they will me not spare,
And with sharp spears my heart will tear,
To the Gloria tibi Domine.
Now sing we, &c.
O come you here, Mother, and you shall see
My hands and my feet nailed to the rood tree,
And my feet, Mother, are fastned thereby,
A vile sight, Mother, for you to see.
Now sing we, and now sing we,
To the Gloria tibi Domine.
And now sing we more or less,
And welcome be this merry Christmas.

JOSEPH WAS AN OLD MAN.

Joseph was an old man,
And an old man was he,
When he wedded Mary
In the land of Galilee.

Joseph and Mary walked
Through an orchard good,
Where was cherries and berries
So red as any blood.

Joseph and Mary walked
  Through an orchard green,
Where was berries and cherries
  As thick as might be seen.

O then bespoke Mary,
  So meek and so mild,
Pluck me one cherry, Joseph,
  For I am with child.

O then bespoke Joseph
  With words most unkind,
Let him pluck thee a cherry
  That brought thee with child.

O then bespoke the Babe
  Within his Mother's womb—
Bow down then the tallest tree
  For my Mother to have some.

Then bowed down the highest tree
  Unto his Mother's hand:
Then she cried, See, Joseph,
  I have cherries at command!

O then bespake Joseph,
  I have done Mary wrong,
But cheer up, my dearest,
  And be not cast down.

Then Mary plucked a cherry
  As red as the blood;
Then Mary went home
  With her heavy load.

Then Mary took her Babe
  And sat him on her knee,
Saying, My dear Son, tell me
  What this world will be.

O, I shall be as dead, Mother,
  As the stones in the wall;
O, the stones in the streets, Mother,
  Shall mourn for me all.

Upon Easter-day, Mother,
  My uprising shall be;
O, the sun and the moon, Mother,
  Shall both rise with me.

FOR SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

Saint John, Saint John was Christ's disciple,
And Evangelist also;
He for the sake of Jesus Christ
Much pains did undergo,
Because he loved our Saviour Christ,
As Holy Scriptures say,
And was belov'd of him also,
And in his bosom lay.
Saint John for love of our Saviour
Did undergo much pain,
And never ceased during life
To preach Christ Jesus' name.

Saint John, he at Jerusalem
Did preach God's holy word,
And for the same the spiteful Jews
They did him cruel scourge.
Then did he for the same rejoice,
That he was counted worthy
To suffer for the sake of Christ,
And would him not deny.
Saint John, &c.
To Patmos banish'd was Saint John,
As Scripture doth record,
For the testimony of Christ,
And his most holy word.

And as he was in the Spirit
  On the Lord's blessed day,
Our Saviour by an Angel spake,
  And unto him did say,
                Saint John, &c.
I am Alpha and Omega,
  Which was and is to come;
And what thou seest write in a book—
  Thus said he to Saint John—
And send it to the Churches then,
  Which are in Asia seven.
Thus said the Angel to Saint John,
  Which came to him from Heaven.
                Saint John, &c.
Then John turn'd him about to see,
  And was astonished
At the sight of the Angel bright,
  Who said, Be comforted,
For I was alive, and also dead,
  Now I live for evermore,
And have the keys of death and hell;
  Take comfort now therefore.
                Saint John, &c.
Then wretched Cæsar, as 'tis said,
  The Emperor Domitian,
Into a tub of boiling oil
  At Rome he thrust Saint John.

Therein received he no harm,
  But safely from thence came,
And died at last at Ephesus—
  Writing declares the same.
                Saint John, &c.

FOR SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST.

When bloody Herod reigned king
  Within Judea's land,
Much woes his cruel will did bring,
  By bloody fierce command.
Amongst the rest with grief opprest,
  Was good St. John there slain,
Who on this day, 'midst sport and play,
  A martyr'd death did gain.

King Herod, being in his tower,
  Herodias dancing spied,
As fair as any summer's flower
  In all her painted pride;
Clad in bright gold, which to behold
  King Herod's heart admired,
He bid her crave and she should have,
  Though she his crown desired.

A kingly crown I do not wish,
  But Saint John's head, she said;
Wherefore, all bleeding in a dish,
  Before me be it laid.
Which was the thing she of the king
  Desired with right good will,
Whose death was wrought, and to her brought:
  Such minds have strumpets still.

Thus wine and women, we do see,
  Men's minds to folly win;
For Herod did too soon agree,
  And gave consent to sin.
Then on this day, as Scriptures say,
  Saint John did lose his head,
Whilst she did sing before the king,
  As he at table fed.

Then let us all by him take heed
  Of riots and excess,
For fear that soon to us it bring
  As great a wickedness.
And let us sport in civil sort,
  Content each merry mind;
So shall we all in the good hall
  Much joy and comfort find.

Now kindly for my pretty song,
  Good butler, draw some beer;
You know what duties do belong
  To him that sings so clear.
Holly and ivy, and drink to drive ye,
  To the brown bowl of berry;
With apples and ale, and a Christmas tale,
  We'll make this houshold merry.

WHEN JESUS CHRIST WAS TWELVE.

When Jesus Christ was twelve years old,
As Holy Scripture plainly told,
He then disputed brave and bold
  Amongst the learned doctors.
    Then, praise the Lord, both high and low,
    That He his wondrous works may shew,
    And we at last to Heaven may go,
      Where Christ in glory reigneth.

At thirty years he then began
To preach the Gospel unto man,
And all Judea wondered then
  To hear his heavenly doctrine.
                Then praise, &c.

Such works he did as made them muse,
Amongst the proud hard-hearted Jews,
Yet evermore they did refuse
  To own him for their Saviour.
                Then praise, &c.
Then first of all, by power divine,
He turned water into wine,
When at the marriage he did dine,
  Which made all people wonder.
                Then praise, &c.
Moreover, with five loaves of bread
Five thousand men he fully fed,
Whereby his glory far was spread
  Throughout the land of Jury.
                Then praise, &c.
The widow's son that dead did lie,
When Christ our Saviour did pass by,
He raised to life immediately,
  To her great joy and comfort.
                Then praise, &c.
Likewise, he heal'd the lepers ten,
Whose bodies were full filthy then,
Yet, not but one return'd again,
  His humble thanks to render.
                Then praise, &c.
The woman that was perplexed sore
With an issue of blood twelve years and more,
Unto her health he did restore,
  In the minute of an hour. Then, &c.

And more his heavenly might to shew,
Himself upon the sea did go,
There never could a man do so,
  But only Christ our Saviour.
                Then praise, &c.
And yet, for all his works so great,
The Jews were in a fearful heat,
That no persuasion could intreat,
  But truly they must kill him.
                Then praise, &c.
When they bereav'd his life so good,
The moon was turned into blood,
The earth and temple shaking stood,
  And graves full wide did open.
                Then praise, &c.
Then some of them that stood thereby,
With voices loud began to cry,
This was the Son of God truly,
  Without any fear or doubting.
                Then praise, &c.
For, as he said, it proved so plain,
Within three days he rose again,
Although he suffered bitter pain,
  Both death and hell he conquer'd.
                Then praise, &c.
Then afterward ascended he
To Heaven in glorious majesty;
With him God grant us all to be,
  For evermore rejoicing. Then, &c.

MAN'S DUTY;

OR, MEDITATION FOR THE TWELVE HOURS OF THE DAY.

One God there is of wisdom, glory, might,
One faith there is to guide our souls aright,
One truth there is for man to practise in,
One baptism to cleanse our souls from sin.

Two Testaments there are, the Old and New,
In which the Law and Gospel thou may'st view;
The one for works and deeds doth precepts give,
The other saith the just by faith shall live.

Three persons in the glorious Trinity
Make one true God in perfect unity,
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, those three
For ever equal and eternal be.

Four most divine and righteous holy men
They did the life of our Redeemer pen,
They were Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John likewise,
Whose righteous truth let every Christian prize.

Five senses do in every man maintain
A governing of power, rule and reign ;
The hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, smelling,
Which at thy death will leave thee and thy dwelling.

Six days, O man, thou hast to labor in,
So merciful and good thy God hath been,
Of seven unto himself he took but one,
O rob him not of that to leave him none.

Seven liberal arts, by a divine decree,
Unto man's knowing soul united be ;
Rhetorick, grammar, music, and geometry,
Arithmetick, logick, and astronomy.

Eight persons in the ark of Noah were
When God he would the world no longer spare ;
Sin did abound, therefore all flesh he drown'd
Which in that ship of safety were not bound.

Nine Muses their harmonious voices raise
To sing our blessed dear Redeemer's praise,
Who is the spring from whence all blessings flow
To us poor living mortals here below.

There are commandments ten we should obey,
And yet how apt are we to go astray,
Leaving them all our folly to pursue,
As if we did not care what God could do.

Eleven disciples did with Jesus pray
When Judas did our Saviour Christ betray,
Though, covetous for greedy gain, he fell
To be perdition's child condemned to hell.

Twelve tribes there were amongst our fathers old,
Twelve articles our Christian faith does hold,
Twelve gates in New Jerusalem there be,
Unto which city Christ bring thee and me.

IN THOSE TWELVE DAYS.

In those twelve days, and in those twelve days, let
us be glad,
For God of his power hath all things made.

What is that which is but one?
What is that which is but one?
We have but one God alone
In Heaven above sits on his throne.

What are they which are but two?
What are they which are but two?
Two Testaments, as we are told,
The one is New and the other Old.
And in those, &c.

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What are they that are but three?
What are they that are but three?
Three persons in the Trinity,
The Father, Son, and Ghost Holy.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but four?
What are they that are but four?
Four Gospels written true,
John, Luke, Mark, and Matthew.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but five?
What are they that are but five?
Five senses we have to tell,
God grant us grace to use them well.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but six?
What are they that are but six?
Six ages this world shall last,
Five of them are gone and past.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but seven?
What are they that are but seven?
Seven days in the week have we,
Six to work and the seventh holy.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but eight?
What are they that are but eight?

Eight beatitudes are given,
Use them well and go to Heaven.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but nine?
What are they that are but nine?
Nine degrees of Angels high
Which praise God continually.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but ten?
What are they that are but ten?
Ten Commandments God hath given,
Keep them right and go to Heaven.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but eleven?
What are they that are but eleven?
Eleven thousand virgins did partake
And suffered death for Jesus' sake.
And in those, &c.
What are they that are but twelve?
What are they that are but twelve?
Twelve Apostles Christ did chuse
To preach the Gospel to the Jews.
And in those, &c.

FOR INNOCENTS' DAY.

When Herod in Jerusalem
  Did reign in princely throne,
Strange tidings then were brought to him
  Of a King lately born.
    O cruel Herod, hard of heart,
      Accursed mayst thou be,
    That slewest so many innocents
      That never harmed thee.

Which news did so his mind torment,
  So strange a thing should be,
That then amongst the Jews should reign
  A greater King than he.
    O cruel, &c.
When he did then these tidings prove,
  Most wickedly he will'd,
That all males under two years old
  Should presently be kill'd.
    O cruel, &c.
Then did the Lord an Angel send
  To Joseph where he lay,
And bid him straight to Egypt go,
  And bear the child away.
    O cruel, &c.

The men appointed went abroad
  All infants blood to spill,
Supposing that amongst the rest
  They should Christ Jesus kill.
                O cruel, &c.
Now mark the judgments of the Lord
  On their ungodly train,
King Herod's son where he was nurs'd
  Amongst the rest was slain.
                O cruel, &c.
Of Herod's bloody reign with sad
  And grievous soul I speak,
By whom this day was slain, 'tis said,
  Ten thousand children weak.
                O cruel, &c.
Judah abounds with scarlet wounds
  Of sucking babes that died,
The earth was spread with crimson red,
  All caused by Herod's pride.
                O cruel, &c.
For unto him was told, that born
  There was a greater King,
Whose matchless power should him soon
  Unto subjection bring.
                O cruel, &c.
Wherefore he sent with full contempt
  His armed bands in rage,
For to destroy each mother's joy
  Under two years of age. O cruel, &c.

The Son of God they straightway sought,
  That he might then be slain,
That his destruction might be wrought,
  As Herod did ordain.
O cruel, &c.
But soon from Heaven was warning given
  That Mary should not stay,
But with her child at once exil'd
  To Egypt take her way.
O cruel, &c.
Let us give praise to God therefore
  With modest mirth and glee,
And still this day adore, wherein
  Our Saviour was set free.
O cruel, &c.

FOR SAINT STEPHEN'S DAY.

Saint Stephen was an holy man,
  Endued with heavenly might,
And many wonders he did work
  Before the people's sight.
And by the blessed Spirit of God,
  Which did his heart inflame,
He spared not in every place
  To preach Christ Jesus' name.

O man, do never faint nor fear
When God the truth shall try,
But mark how Stephen for Christ's sake
Was willing for to die.

Which doctrine seem'd most wond'rous strange
Among the faithless Jews,
And for the same despitefully
Good Stephen they accused.
Before the elders was he brought,
His answer for to make,
But they could not his spirit withstand
Whereby this man did speak.
O man, &c.
And then false witness did appear,
And look'd him in the face,
And said he spake blasphemous words
Against that holy place;
And how he said that Jesus Christ
The Temple would destroy,
And change the laws which they so long
From Moses did enjoy.
O man, &c.
Whilst this was told, the multitude
Beholding him aright,
His comely face began to shine
Most like an Angel bright.

The High Priest then to them did say,
  And bid them tell at large,
If this was true which at that time
  They laid unto his charge.
                O man, &c.
Then Stephen did put forth his voice,
  And he did first unfold
The wond'rous works that God hath wrought
  Even from their fathers old;
That they thereby might plain perceive
  Christ Jesus should be he
That from the burthen of the law
  Should save us frank and free.
                O man, &c.
But, oh! quoth he, you wicked men,
  Which of the prophets all
Did not your fathers persecute,
  And keep in woeful thrall,
Who told the coming of the just
  In prophecies most plain,
Who here amongst you was betray'd
  And most unjustly slain?
                O man, &c.
But when they heard him so to say,
  Their hearts in sunder clave,
And gnashing on him with their teeth,
  Like mad men they did rave.

And with a shout most loud and shrill
  Upon him all they ran,
And then without the city gates
  They ston'd this holy man.
                O man, &c.
Then he most meekly on his knees
  To God did pray at large,
Desiring that He would not lay
  This sin unto their charge;
Then yielding up his soul to God,
  Who had it dearly bought,
He lost his life, whose body then
  To grave was seemly brought.
                O man, &c.

FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

Hark! the herald Angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinner reconcil'd.
    Hark! the herald Angels sing,
    Glory to the new-born King.

Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark! the herald, &c.
Christ by highest Heaven ador'd,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Hark! the herald, &c.
Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.
Hark! the herald, &c.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald, &c.

HARK, HARK! WHAT NEWS.

Hark, hark! what news the Angels bring,
Glad tidings of a new-born King,
Who is the Saviour of mankind,
In whom we may salvation find.

This is the day, the blessed morn,
The Saviour of mankind was born,
Born of a maid, a Virgin pure,
Born without sin, from guilt secure.

Hail, blessed Virgin, full of grace!
Blessed above all mortal race,
Whose blessed womb brought forth in one,
A God, a Saviour, and a Son.

A perfect God, a perfect man,
A mystery which no man can
Attain to, tho' he's e'er so wise,
Till he ascend above the skies.

Arise, my soul, and then, my voice,
In hymns of praise early rejoice,
His fame extol and magnify,
Upon those errands Angels fly.

As Angels sung at Jesus' birth,
Sure we have greater cause for mirth,
For why, it was for our sake
Christ did our human nature take.

Dear Christ, thou didst thyself debase,
Thus to descend to human race,
And leave thy Father's throne above:
Lord, what could move thee to this love?

Man that was made out of the dust,
He found a paradise at first;
But see the God of Heaven and earth
Laid in a manger at his birth.

Surely the manger where he lies
Doth figure out his sacrifice,
And by his birth all men may see
A pattern of humility.

Stupendous Babe! my God and King,
Thy praises I will ever sing,
In joyful accents raise my voice,
And in my praise of God rejoice.

My soul, learn by thy Saviour's birth
For to debase thyself on earth,
That I may be exalted high,
To live with him eternally.

I am resolved whilst here I live,
As I'm in duty bound, to give
All glory to the Deity,
One God alone in persons three.

WHILST SHEPHERDS WATCH'D.

Whilst Shepherds watch'd their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The Angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

Fear not, said he, for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind,
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign.

The heavenly Babe you there shall find,
To human view display'd,
All meanly wrapt in swaddling bands
And in a manger laid.

Thus spake the Seraph, and forthwith
  Appeared a heavenly throng
Of Angels praising God, and thus
  Address'd their joyful song :

All glory be to God on high,
  And to the earth be peace,
Good-will henceforth from Heav'n to men
  Begin and never cease.
                Hallelujah.

HAIL ! EVER HAIL !

Hail ! ever hail ! auspicious morn,
  The brightest since our fall :
Mortals, exult ! the Saviour 's born,
  O crown him Lord of all !

Down from celestial climes of day
  He hastes to tread our ball,
Glory illumines all the way,
  O crown him Lord of all !

Hark ! loud hosannahs from the song
  The melting airs inthrall,
A Saviour angels waft along,
  And shout him Lord of all.

Wrapt in their folded vests of light
  They seek the sordid stall,
Gaze with emotions of delight,
  And own him Lord of all.

Shepherds, to you a herald flies,
  Obey the early call,
Immanuel in a manger lies,
  Go crown him Lord of all.

He comes, he comes, our world to bless,
  To ransom every soul
From shades of endless wretchedness:
  O crown him Lord of all!

The sceptre, robe, and throne prepare,
  Attend, ye great and small,
With acclamations rend the air,
  And crown him Lord of all.

THE HOLY WELL.

As it fell out one May morning,
  And upon one bright holiday,
Sweet Jesus asked of his dear Mother,
  If he might go to play.

To play, to play, sweet Jesus shall go,
  And to play pray get you gone,
And let me hear of no complaint
  At night when you come home.

Sweet Jesus went down to yonder town,
  As far as the Holy Well,
And there did see as fine children
  As any tongue can tell.

He said, God bless you every one,
  And your bodies Christ save and see:
Little children, shall I play with you,
  And you shall play with me.

But they made answer to him, No:
They were lords' and ladies' sons;
And he, the meanest of them all,
Was but a maiden's child, born in an ox's stall.

Sweet Jesus turned him around,
And he neither laugh'd nor smil'd,
But the tears came trickling from his eyes
Like water from the skies.

Sweet Jesus turned him about,
  To his Mother's dear home went he,
And said, I have been in yonder town,
  As after you may see.

I have been down in yonder town,
  As far as the Holy Well,
There did I meet as fine children
  As any tongue can tell.

I bid God bless them every one,
  And their bodies Christ save and see:
Little children, shall I play with you,
  And you shall play with me.

But they made answer to me, No,
They were lords' and ladies' sons,
And I, the meanest of them all,
Was but a maiden's child, born in an ox's stall.

Though you are but a maiden's child,
  Born in an ox's stall,
Thou art the Christ, the King of Heaven,
  And the Saviour of them all.

Sweet Jesus, go down to yonder town,
  As far as the Holy Well,
And take away those sinful souls,
  And dip them deep in Hell.

Nay, nay, sweet Jesus said,
  Nay, nay, that may not be,
For there are too many sinful souls
  Crying out for the help of me.

O then spoke the Angel Gabriel,
Upon one good Saint Stephen,
Altho' you're but a maiden's child,
You are the King of Heaven.

THE CARNAL AND THE CRANE.

As I pass'd by a river side,
And there as I did reign,
In argument I chanced to hear
A Carnal and a Crane.

The Carnal said unto the Crane,
If all the world should turn,
Before we had the Father,
But now we have the Son!

From whence does the Son come?
From where and from what place?
He said, In a manger,
Between an ox and ass!

I pray thee, said the Carnal,
Tell me before thou go,
Was not the Mother of Jesus
Conceiv'd by the Holy Ghost?

She was the purest Virgin,
  And the cleanest from sin;
She was the handmaid of our Lord,
  And Mother of our King.

Where is the golden cradle
  That Christ was rocked in?
Where are the silken sheets
  That Jesus was wrapt in?

A manger was the cradle
  That Christ was rocked in;
The provender the asses left,
  So sweetly he slept on.

There was a Star in the West land,
  So bright it did appear
Into King Herod's chamber,
  And where King Herod were.

The Wise Men soon espied it,
  And told the King on high,
A princely babe was born that night
  No king could e'er destroy.

If this be true, King Herod said,
  As thou tellest unto me,
This roasted cock that lies in the dish
  Shall crow full fences three.

The cock soon freshly feather'd was,
By the work of God's own hand,
And then three fences crowed he,
In the dish where he did stand.

Rise up, rise up, you merry men all,
See that you ready be,
All children under two years old
Now slain they all shall be.

Then Jesus, ah! and Joseph,
And Mary, that was so pure,
They travell'd into Egypt,
As you shall find it sure.

And when they came to Egypt's land,
Amongst those fierce wild beasts,
Mary, she being weary,
Must needs sit down to rest.

Come sit thee down, says Jesus,
Come sit thee down by me,
And thou shalt see how these wild beasts
Do come and worship me.

First, came the lovely lion,
Which Jesus's grace did spring,
And of the wild beasts in the field,
The lion shall be the king.

We 'll choose our virtuous princes,
  Of birth and high degree,
In every sundry nation,
  Where'er we come and see.

Then Jesus, ah! and Joseph,
  And Mary, that was unknown,
They travelled by a husbandman,
  Just while his seed was sown.

God speed thee, man! said Jesus,
  Go fetch thy ox and wain,
And carry home thy corn again,
  Which thou this day hast sown.

The husbandman fell on his knees,
  Even before his face;
Long time hast thou been looked for,
  But now thou art come at last;

And I myself do now believe;
  Thy name is Jesus called;
Redeemer of mankind thou art,
  Though undeserving all.

The truth, man, thou hast spoken,
  Of it thou may'st be sure,
For I must lose my precious blood
  For thee and thousands more.

If any one should come this way,
  And enquire for me alone,
Tell them that Jesus passed by,
  As thou thy seed did sow.

After that there came King Herod,
  With his train so furiously,
Enquiring of the husbandman,
  Whether Jesus passed by.

Why, the truth it must be spoke,
  And the truth it must be known,
For Jesus passed by this way,
  When my seed was sown.

But now I have it reapen,
  And some laid on my wain,
Ready to fetch and carry
  Into my barn again.

Turn back, says the Captain,
  Your labour and mine 's in vain,
It 's full three quarters of a year
  Since he his seed has sown.

So Herod was deceived
  By the work of God's own hand,
And further he proceeded
  Into the Holy Land.

There 's thousands of children young,
  Which for his sake did die,
Do not forbid those little ones,
  And do not them deny.

The truth now I have spoken,
  And the truth now I have shown;
Even the blessed Virgin,
  She 's now brought forth a Son.

JOYS SEVEN.

The first good joy our Mary had,
  It was the joy of one,
To see her own Son Jesus
  To suck at her breast bone;
To suck at her breast bone,
  Good man, and blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
  And Christ to eternity.

The next good joy our Mary had,
  It was the joy of two,
To see her own Son Jesus
  To make the lame to go;
To make the lame to go,
  Good man, &c.

The next good joy our Mary had,
It was the joy of three,
To see her own Son Jesus
To make the blind to see;
To make the blind to see,
Good man, &c.
The next good joy our Mary had,
It was the joy of four,
To see her own Son Jesus
To read the Bible o'er;
To read the Bible o'er,
Good man, &c.
The next good joy our Mary had,
It was the joy of five,
To see her own Son Jesus
To raise the dead alive;
To raise the dead alive,
Good man, &c.
The next good joy our Mary had,
It was the joy of six,
To see her own Son Jesus
To wear the crucifix;
To wear the crucifix,
Good man, &c.
The next good joy our Mary had,
It was the joy of seven,
To see her own Son Jesus
To wear the crown of Heaven;

To wear the crown of Heaven
  Good man, and blessed may he be,
Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
  And Christ to eternity.

THE MOON SHINES BRIGHT.

The moon shines bright, and the stars give a light,
  A little before it was day,
Our Lord, our God, he called on us,
  And bid us awake and pray.

Awake, awake, good people all,
  Awake and you shall hear,
Our Lord, our God, died on the cross,
  For us whom he loved so dear.

O fair, O fair Jerusalem,
  When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end,
  Thy joy that I may see?

The fields were green as green could be,
  When from his glorious seat
Our Lord, our God, he watered us,
  With his heavenly dew so sweet.

And for the saving of our souls
  Christ died upon the cross;
We ne'er shall do for Jesus Christ
  As he has done for us.

The life of man is but a span,
  And cut down in its flower,
We are here to-day and to-morrow are gone,
  We are all dead in an hour.

O pray teach your children, man,
  The while that you are here;
It will be better for your souls
  When your corpse lies on the bier.

To-day you may be alive, dear man,
  Worth many a thousand pound;
To-morrow may be dead, dear man,
  And your body be laid under ground.

With one turf at your head, O man,
  And another at your feet,
Thy good deeds and thy bad, O man,
  Will all together meet.

My song is done, I must be gone,
  I can stay no longer here.
God bless you all, both great and small,
  And send you a happy new year!

PART THE THIRD;

CONTAINING

SPECIMENS OF FRENCH PROVINCIAL CAROLS.

NOUEL.

Sur l'ayre, "Quand je me leve le matin."

L'An mil siés cens quaranto cinc
  Repassen per nostro memorio
Coussi Jousép en paure trinc
  Acoumpaignée le Réy de Glorio,
Quand demourabo dins les réns
De Mario la piucélo préns.

Jousép é Mario maridats
  En Bétlehén sén ban amaço,
Nou soun pas fort amounedats.
  Més bé soun de Rouyalo raço,
E' l'efan és Rey dins les réns,
De Mario la piucélo préns.

Sense gran argen al paquét
  N'an pas un trinc de grand parado,
Nou menoun que le bourriquét
  Dambé le bioou soun camarado,
Diu mentretan és dins les réns,
De Mario la piucélo préns.

Aprép un penible cami
  Sant Jousép é la santo méro
Que nou saben pas oun dourmi
  Ban beilha dins uno feignéro
Oun l'efan que Diu sort des réns
Nou laysso plus sa méro préns.

Aqui la paillo lour fa liéyt
  Sense cousseno ni courtino
Oun las estelos de la néyt
  Bezen ajayre lour Regino,
E' naysse l' efan de sous réns
Piucélo toutjour é nou préns.

NOEL.

Su l'ar. " Ma mere mariez-moi."

Guillô, pran ton tamborin ;
Toi, pran tai fleùte, Rôbin.
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan ;
Au son de cés instruman
Je diron Noei gaiman.

C' étó lai môde autrefoi
De loüé le Roi dé Roi,
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan ;
Au son de cés instruman,
Ai nos an fau faire autan.

Ce jor le Diale at ai cu,
Randons an graice ai Jésu,
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan,
Au son de cés instruman,
Fezon lai nique ai Satan.

L'homme & Dei son pu d'aicor
Que lai fleùte & le tambor.
Au son de cés instruman,
Turelurelu, patapatapan ;
Au son de cés instruman,
Chanton, danson, sautons-an.

NOEL.

Sur l'air, " Ver lou Pourtaou San-Laze."

Lon de la gran carriere,
Ver lou Pourtaou-Limber,
Ay vis pareisse en l'air
Un Ange de lumiere,
Cridavou de per-toút,
Bergié, reveillas-vous.

Ere su ma mounture,
D'abord sieou descendu,
Et m'a dit, beou Moussu,
Ay, la belle aventure,
Es na lou Fis de Dieou,
Toun Mestre amay lou mieou.

Foou quitta ta famille,
Vay-t'en en Bethelem,
Trouvaras l'Inoucen
A cent pas de la Ville,
Portou-ye quaouquouren,
Es lougea paouramen.

Ay poursui moun vouyage,
Ay vis veni de gen,
Qu' éroun touteis ensen,
Em'un grand equipage,
Erou trés gran Seignour,
Eme toutou sa cour.

Chascun avié sei Page,
Eme sei Gardou-cor,
Me sieou pensa d'abor
Qu'éroun leis trés Rei Mage,
Que venien adoura
Lou gran Rei nouveou na.

Me sieou més à n'un cayre,
Per lei leissa passa,
Et puis ay demanda
A seis homes d'affayre,
Si van en Bethelem
Veire lou Dieou neissen.

Y'a un d'aquelei Garde
Que má brutalisa,
Su lou cham m'a douna
Un bon co d'halabarde :
Si m' espouffesse pa,
Me venié may piqua.

Yeou ay suivi la foulou,
Sen me descouragea,
La doulour m'a passa,
Ou bout d'une miéchourou,
Sieou ana eme lou trin
Jus-quou ver lou Douphin.

Avien de dromadairou,
Quantita de charrios,
Et de cameou fort gros,
La suite érou fort bellou,
Jamay yeou n'ay ren vi
Eme tant de plesi.

Un astre lei guidave,
Plus brillan qu'un souleou,
Jamay ren de tant beou,
Tout lou mounde badave :
Lou tem m'a ren dura,
Tant ére esmerveilla.

Aprés dex jour de marche,
L'astre s'es arresta
Sur un lio tout trouca,
Ben plus precioux que l'Arche,
Aqui lou Tout-puissan
Parei coum'un enfan.

NOEL NOUVEAU.

Sur l'air, " Or dites-nous, Marie," &c.

Célébrons la Naissance
Nostri Salvatoris,
Qui fait la complaisance
Dei sui Patris ;
Cet Enfan tout aimable,
In nocte mediâ,
Est né dans une étable
De castâ Mariâ.
Cette heureuse nouvelle
Olim Pastoribus
Par un Ange fidelle
Fuit nunciatus,
Leur disant, laissez paître
In agro viridi,
Venez voir votre Maître,
Filiumque Dei.
A cette voix céleste
Omnes hi pastores,
D'un air doux & modeste,
Et multum gaudentes,
Incontinent marchèrent
Relicto pecore ;
Tous ensemble arrivèrent
In Bethlem Judæ.

Le premier qu'ils trouvèrent
Intrantes stabulum,
Fut Joseph ce bon père,
Senio confectum,
Qui d'ardeur nompareille,
It obviam illis,
Les reçoit, les accueille
Expansis brachiis.
Il fait à tous caresse,
Et in præsepio
Fait voir plein d'alégresse
Matrem cum filio ;
Ces bergers s'étonnèrent
Intuentes eum,
Que les Anges révèrent
Pannis involutum.
Lorsqu'ils se prosternèrent
Cum reverentiâ,
Et tous ils adorèrent
Pietate summâ
Ce Sauveur tout aimable
Qui homo factus est,
Et qui dans une étable
Nasci dignatus est.
D'un cœur humble & sincere,
Suis muneribus,
Donnèrent à la mere
Et filio ejus

Des marques de tendresse,
Atque his peractis,
Font voir leur alégresse
Hymnis & Canticis.
Mille Esprits Angéliques
Juncti pastoribus
Chantent dans leur musique
Puer vobis natus ;
Au Dieu par qui nous sommes,
Gloria in excelsis,
Et la paix soit aux hommes
Bonæ voluntatis.
Jamais pareilles fêtes
Judicio omnium,
Même jusques aux bêtes
Testantur gaudium :
Enfin cette Naissance
Cunctis creaturis
Donne rejouissance,
Et replet gaudiis.
Qu'on ne soit insensible,
Adeamus omnes,
Ce Dieu rendu passible
Propter nos mortales,
Et tous de compagnie
Exoramus eum,
Qu'à la fin de la vie
Det regnum beatum.

NOEL ANCIEN.

Sur un chant joyeux.

Quand Dieu naquit à Noël
  Dedans la Judée,
On vit ce jour solemnel
  La joie inondée;
Il n'étoit ni petit ni grand
Qui n'apportât son presént,
Et n'o, n'o, n'o, n'o,
Et n'offrit, frit, frit,
Et n'o, n'o, & n'offrit,
Et n'offrit sans cesse Toute sa richesse.

L'un apportoit un agneau
  Avec un grand zele,
L'autre un peu de lait nouveau
  Dedans une écuelle;
Tel, sous ses pauvres habits,
Cachoit un peu de pain bis,
Pour la, la, la, la,
Pour la, sain, sain, sain,
Pour la, la, pour la sain,
Pour la Ste Vierge Et Joseph Concierge.

Ce bon Père putatif
De Jesus mon Maître,
Que le Pasteur plus chétif
Desiroit connoître,
D'un air obligeant & doux,
Recevoit les dons de tous,
Sans cé, cé, cé, cé,
Sans céré, ré, ré,
Sans cé, cé, sans céré,
Sans cérémonie, Pour le fruit de vie.

Il ne fut pas jusqu'aux Rois
Du rivage Maure,
Qui joint au nombre de trois,
Ne vinssent encore ;
Ces bons Princes d'Orient,
Offrirent en le priant,
L'en, l'en, l'en, l'en, l'en,
Cens, cens, cens, cens, cens,
L'en, l'en, l'en, cens, cens, cens,
L'encens & la myrrhe Et l'or qu'on admire.

Quoiqu'il n'en eût pas besoin,
Jesus notre Maître,
Il en prit avecque soin
Pour faire connoître
Qu'il avoit les qualités
Par ces dons représentés,
D'un vrai, vrai, vrai, vrai,

D'un Roi, Roi, Roi, Roi,
D'un vrai, vrai, d'un Roi, Roi,
D'un vrai Roi de Gloire En qui l'on doit croire.

Plaise à ce divin Enfant
Nous faire la grâce,
Dans son sejour triomphant
D'avoir une place:
Si nous y sommes jamais,
Nous goûterons une paix
De lon, lon, lon, lon,
De gue, gue, gue, gue,
De lon, lon, de gue, gue,
De longue dureé Dans cet Empirée.

NOEL.

Sur l'air, "Dans le fond de ce bocage."

Venés veire din l'estable
Aqueou bel Enfan qu'és na,
Sarés touteis estouna,
N'ia ren de plus admirable.

Es d'unou doublou nature,
Fis de l'home, Fis de Dieou:
Es miracle quand es vieou,
Après lei maou qu'eou n'endure.

Certou yeou vous pode dire
  Que l'ay jamay vi ploura,
  Ni gémi, ni souspira,
May ben souven l'ay vi rire.

Jousé lou pren, lou caresse,
  Et lou sarre entre sei bras :
  N'en sara pas jamay las,
Beleou mourra de tendresse.

Sa Mayre, la bonou Dame,
  Li dit cen millou douçour :
  Gesus, moun cor, moun amour,
Vous sias lou Rei de moun ame.

De joyou toutou ravide,
  Li parlou d'un toun plus fort :
  Vous ame coume moun cor,
Vous ame may que ma vide.

Jousé et la Viergeou Mayre
  Nous enseignoun la liçoun
  Et nous mostroun la façoun
De tout ce que deven fayre.

CHRISTMAS PLAY

OF

"SAINT GEORGE,"

AS REPRESENTED IN CORNWALL.

Characters.

FATHER CHRISTMAS.	TURKISH KNIGHT.
THE DOCTOR.	THE DRAGON.
SAINT GEORGE.	THE GIANT TURPIN.
KING OF EGYPT.	

Enter the Turkish Knight.

Open your doors, and let me in,
I hope your favors I shall win;
Whether I rise or whether I fall,
I'll do my best to please you all.
St. George is here, and swears he will come in,
And, if he does, I know he'll pierce my skin.
If you will not believe what I do say,
Let Father Christmas come in—clear the way,
[*Retires.*

Enter Father Christmas.

Here come I, old Father Christmas,
Welcome, or welcome not,
I hope old Father Christmas
Will never be forgot.
I am not come here to laugh or to jeer,
But for a pocketfull of money, and a skinfull of beer.
If you will not believe what I do say,
Come in the King of Egypt—clear the way.

Enter the King of Egypt.

Here I, the King of Egypt, boldly do appear,
St. George, St. George, walk in, my only son and heir.
Walk in, my son St. George, and boldly act thy part,
That all the people here may see thy wond'rous art.

Enter Saint George.

Here come I, St. George, from Britain did I spring,
I'll fight the Dragon bold, my wonders to begin.
I'll clip his wings, he shall not fly;
I'll cut him down, or else I die.

Enter the Dragon.

Who's he that seeks the Dragon's blood,
And calls so angry, and so loud?
That English dog, will he before me stand?
I'll cut him down with my courageous hand.
With my long teeth, and scurvy jaw,
Of such I'd break up half a score,
And stay my stomach, till I'd more.
[*St. George and the Dragon fight, the latter is killed.*

Father Christmas.

Is there a doctor to be found
All ready, near at hand,
To cure a deep and deadly wound,
And make the champion stand?

Enter Doctor.

Oh! yes, there is a doctor to be found
All ready, near at hand,
To cure a deep and deadly wound,
And make the champion stand.

Fa. Chri. What can you cure?
Doctor. All sorts of diseases,
Whatever you pleases,
The phthisic, the palsy, and the gout;
If the devil's in, I'll blow him out.

Fa. Chri. What is your fee?
Doctor. Fifteen pound, it is my fee,
The money to lay down.
But, as 'tis such a rogue as thee,
I cure for ten pound.
I carry a little bottle of alicumpane,
Here Jack, take a little of my flip flop,
Pour it down thy tip top,
Rise up and fight again.

[*The Doctor performs his cure, the fight is renewed, and the Dragon again killed.*

Saint George.

Saint George.

Here am I, St. George,
That worthy champion bold,
And with my sword and spear
I won three crowns of gold.
I fought the fiery dragon,
And brought him to the slaughter;
By that I won fair Sabra,
The King of Egypt's daughter.
Where is the man, that now will me defy?
I'll cut his giblets full of holes, and make his buttons fly.

The Turkish Knight advances.

Here come I, the Turkish Knight,
Come from the Turkish land to fight.
I'll fight Saint George, who is my foe,
I'll make him yield before I go;
He brags to such a high degree,
He thinks there's none can do the like of he.

Saint George.

Where is the Turk, that will before me stand?
I'll cut him down with my courageous hand.

[*They fight, the Knight is overcome, and falls on one knee.*

Turkish Knight.

Oh! pardon me, St. George, pardon of thee I crave,
Oh! pardon me this night, and I will be thy slave.

Saint George.

No pardon shalt thou have, while I have foot to stand,
So rise thee up again, and fight out sword in hand.

[*They fight again, and the Knight is killed, Father Christmas calls for the Doctor, with whom the same dialogue occurs as before, and the cure is performed.*

Enter the Giant Turpin.

Here come I, the Giant, bold Turpin is my name,
And all the nations round do tremble at my fame.
Where'er I go, they tremble at my sight,
No lord or champion long with me would fight.

Saint George.

Here's one that dares to look thee in the face,
And soon will send thee to another place.

[*They fight, and the Giant is killed, medical aid is called in as before, and the cure performed by the Doctor, who then, according to the stage direction, is given a basin of girdy grout, and a kick, and driven out.*

Father Christmas.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, your sport is most ended.
So prepare for the hat, which is highly commended.
The hat it would speak, if it had but a tongue.
Come throw in your money, and think it no wrong.

NOTES.

P. 1. The Saxon characters and abbreviations may for the purpose of this collection be read thus, though not critically correct in each instance: — þ, th — w^t, with — z, y — x, sh, in some cases — ꝛ, s — ꝯ, s — ꝫ, r — Q^{ut}, what — a stroke over a letter, m or n.

The song on the Ivy and Holly is from Harl. MS. 5396. (temp. Hen. VI.) and is printed also in Ritson's Ancient Songs.

P. 2. From the same MS. The commencement of some of the lines is not legible.

P. 3. This carol and the three following are from Sloane MS. 2593. (temp. Hen. VI.); this and the carol for St. Stephen's Day, are also printed in Ritson's Ancient Songs. A similar story to the crowing of the capon, will be found in one of the modern collection called "The Carnal and the Crane."

P. 8. From MSS. Bibl. Reg. Brit. Museum, 18. A. x. (15th century.)

P. 11. From Addit. MSS. Brit. Museum, 5465. (being ancient songs, temp. Hen. VII. and VIII. with the music in three and four parts).

P. 13. This, and the five following, are from Addit. MSS. 5665. (formerly in Ritson's possession,) being a collection of church services, hymns, carols, and songs in score, made (as is supposed) in the time of Henry VIII.

P. 14. The term "Proface," was a familiar exclamation at meals, signifying "Much good may it do you." Nares's Glossary.

P. 16. This and the next are also printed in Ritson's Ancient Songs. The music of them, with some others, is published in Mr. Stafford Smith's "Musica Antiqua."

P. 19. From Ritson's Ancient Songs, pp. 125–7, and there stated to be from Wynkyn de Worde's Christmasse Carolles, 1521. The following is the modern version of this carol, from Dibdin's Typog. Antiq. vol. ii. p. 252, as sung in Queen's College, Oxford.

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
Quot estis in convivio.
Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland,
Let us servire cantico.
Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

Our Steward hath provided this
In honour of the King of Bliss;
Which on this day to be served is
In Reginensi Atrio.
Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

P. 20. This, and the two following, are from Bibliographical Miscellanies, Oxford, 1813, 4to. being there taken from "Christmas Carolles," printed by Richard Kele, probably between 1546 and 1552.

P. 27. From "Ane Compendiovs Booke of Godly And Spiritvall Songs, collectit, &c. for avoyding of Sinne and Harlotrie," reprinted in Scotish Poems of the sixteenth Century. Edinburgh, 1801, vol. i. pp. 47-9.

P. 30. From the same work, vol. i. pp. 71-3.

P. 32. From "Tenor, Psalmes, Sonets, and Songs of

Sadnes and Pietie, made into Musicke of Five Parts, &c. By William Byrd, one of the Gent. of the Queene's Maiestie's Royall Chappell, &c. London, 1587," and printed therefrom in Cens. Liter. vol. x. pp. 187-8.

P. 34. From Miscellaneous Poems, by Bishop Hall (about 1597), printed at the end of his Satires. Chiswick, 1824, p. 166.

P. 35. From England's Helicon, 1600, No. 97, reprinted in the British Bibliographer.

P. 36. E. B. Edmund Bolton.

P. 37. From The Christmas Prince, reprint, London, 1816, p. 24.

P. 38. From Ben Jonson (Underwoods) ed. 1756, London, vol. vi. pp. 340-1.

P. 39. This and the three following are from Herrick's Poems, 2 vols. Edinb. 1823. Herrick was born in 1591, and the first edition of the "Hesperides" was published in 1648.

P. 46. By George Wither, printed in Jamieson's Popular Ballads, vol. ii. pp. 273–77.

P. 50. Printed in Ritson's Ancient Songs, pp. 304–6. From a collection intituled "New Christmas Carrols: Being fit also to be sung at Easter, Whitsontide, and other Festival days in the year." No date, 12mo. black letter; "in the curious study of that ever-to-be-respected antiquary Mr. Anthony à Wood, in the Ashmoleian Museum."

P. 53. From Evans's Old Ballads, ed. 1810, vol. i. pp. 146–50.

P. 58. From Sloane MS. 2593.—A great similarity may be observed between this and a modern carol intituled "Joys Seven," at the end of the Second Part. (p. 157.)

P. 59. From Harl. MS. 5937. (one of Bagford's collection,) being on a leaf of an old Almanack, the corresponding leaf having the date 1625, black letter. This is also similar to a more modern carol in the Second Part called "Man's Duty." (p. 133.)

P. 61. The carols contained in the Second Part, with the exception of the last four, are selected from upwards of one hundred obtained in different parts of the West of Cornwall, many of which, including those now published, are still in use. Some few of them are printed occasionally in the county, and also in London, Birmingham, and other places, as broadside carols; others have appeared, with some variation, in Mr. Gilbert's collection, having been derived from similar sources; but a large portion, including some of the most curious, have, I believe, never been printed before.

P. 62. "Where oxen and asses." The common tradition of the ox and the ass in the manger is not mentioned in the New Testament, but is supported by many of the early fathers. The Bee Hive of the Romish Church (p. 198. b.) says, that the idea is taken from Isaiah, chap. i. v. 3. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib."

P. 74. "To three poor Shepherds." According to some legends the number was four, called Misael, Achael, Cyriacus, and Stephanus, and these, with the names of the three Kings, were used as a charm to cure the biting of serpents, and other venomous reptiles and beasts. In the seventh of the Chester Mysteries, the Shepherds, who there are but three, have the more homely names of Harvey, Tudd, and Trowle, and are Cheshire or Lancashire boors by birth and habits. Trowle's gift to our Saviour is "a pair of his wife's old hose."

P. 78. "Joseph being an aged man." It has been the custom in all the legends to represent Joseph as a very aged man. The Apocryphal New Testament describes him so in various places; and in the tenth pageant of the Coventry Mysteries (Cotton. MS. Vespasian, D. viii.) which represents the choice of the Virgin Mary's husband by the

budding of his wand, Joseph complains of his age in many parts of the character, as

> In gret labors my lyff I lede,
> Myn ocupasyon lyth in many place,
> For febylnesse of age my jorney I may nat spede.

Again,

> —— I am so agyd and so olde
> y[t] both my leggys gyn to folde.
> I am ny almost lame.

P. 84. This carol is printed, with a little variation, in an edition of Deloney's "Garland of Good-will," (not the black letter copy,) and called "The Sinner's Redemption." In the same work is a curious ballad, intitled, "A wonderful Prophesie, declared by Christian James, a maid of twenty years of age, who was born near Padstow in the county of Cornwal, &c. To the tune of 'In Summer-time.'" It concludes thus:—

> The magistrates of that same parish,
> Which heard and saw this wonder strange,
> Desir'd to have it put in print,
> 'Cause wicked men their ways may change.

P. 111. "Judas me sold." According to one of the Apocryphal Gospels (1 Infancy, 14.) when Judas was a child our Saviour expelled a devil from him, he having previously struck Jesus on the right side and endeavoured to bite him.

"On the cross." In "Mount Calvary," an old Cornish poem, published by Mr. D. Gilbert, it is related that the cross was made from the wood of the tree whence the apple sprang that caused Adam to sin. Another tradition is, that Seth went to the Cherub that kept Paradise, and received three grains of the Tree of Life. From these he made an oil wherewith Adam was anointed, and the stones were put into his mouth. A tree afterwards sprang up which was subsequently converted into the holy cross. At the time of building the Temple the builder endeavoured to adapt it, but he could not in any way make it suit his purpose, and it remained there for some time unapplied; and afterwards in the pool of Bethesda. After the death of our Saviour

great virtues were attributed to the wood of the cross, and fragments of it were eagerly sought for. A curious story on the subject is related in Harl. MSS. 2252. (temp. Hen. VIII.) intituled, "A grete Myracle of a Knyghte callyde Syr Roger Wallysborow." This knight being in the Holy Land, wished to bring off privily a piece of the cross; he prayed to that effect, when his thigh opened miraculously and received it. He returned to Cornwall, his native country, having in the course of the voyage through virtue of the cross appeased the elements and prevented shipwreck. On his arrival his thigh again opened to let out the fragment of the cross. He gave part to the parish church where this happened, thence called Cross Parish, and the remainder to St. Buryan, where his lands were.

The names of the two thieves were said to have been Titus and Dumachus, (1 Infancy, chap. viii. v. 3.) of whom the former prevented the latter from robbing Joseph and Mary on their journey to Egypt with Jesus, who then foretold to his mother that they should thirty years afterwards be crucified with him, and that Titus should go to Paradise.

P. 112. Ritson (Introduction to Scotch Songs, vol. i. p. civ.) gives the following lines as sung during the Christmas holidays about the middle of the 16th century, which bear a similarity to this carol.

All sones of Adam, rise up with me,
Go praise the blessed Trinitie, &c.
Then spake the Archangel Gabriel, said, Ave, Mary mild,
The Lord of Lords is with thee, now shall you go with
child. *Ecce ancilla domini.*

Then said the Virgin, as thou hast said, so mat it be,
Welcome be heavens King.
There comes a ship far sailing then,
Saint Michel was the stieres-man;
Saint John sate in the horn:
Our Lord harped, our Lady sang,
And all the bells of heaven they rang,
On Christ's sonday at morn, &c.

There is also a printed broadside carol, very similar to this, of which the last verse is rather quaint.—Joseph and his "fair lady" being in the ships,

O he did whistle, and she did sing,
And all the bells on earth did ring,
For joy that our Saviour he was born
On Christmas-day in the morning.

P. 123. "Joseph was an old man," or Cherry Tree Carol, as it is sometimes called, is founded on a very old legend, of which I know not the origin. The incident referred to is a prominent one in the fifteenth pageant of the Coventry Mysteries, and it may be amusing to compare the manner in which it is there told with the present carol.

Mary says,

"A my swete husbond, wolde ye telle to me
What tre is yon standynge upon yon hylle?
Joseph. Forsothe, Mary, it is clepyd a chery tre,
In tyme of yer ye myght fede yow ȳ ou yō fylle.
Maria. Turne ageyn husbond & beholde yon tre,
How y^{t} it blomyght now so swetly.
Joseph. Cum on, Mary, y^{t} we worn at yon cyte,
Or ellys we may be blamyd I telle yow lythly.
Maria. Now my spowse, I pray yow to be hold
How y^{e} cheryes growyn upon yon tre,
For to have ȳ of ryght fayn I wold,
& it plesyd yow to labor so mech for me.
Joseph. Yo^{r} desyr to fulfylle I shal assay sekyrly,
Ow to plucke yow of these cheries it is a werk wylde,
For y^{e} tre is so hyg it wol not be lyghtly,
Y$^{\sim}$ for lete hȳ pluk yow cheryes be gatt yow w^{t} childe.
Maria. Now good Lord I pray the, graunt me yis boun,
To have of yese cheries, & it be yor wylle,
Now I thank it God, yis tre bowyth to me down,
I may now gaderȳ anowe & etyn my fylle.
Joseph. Ow, I know weyl I have offendyd my God ī trinyte,
Spekyng to my spowse these unkynde wurdys,
For now I beleve wel it may non other be
But y^{t} my spowse beryght ye kyngys son of blys, &c.

P. 139. "King Herod's son." It is an old tradition that Herod's own son was among the innocent sufferers on

this occasion, which induced Augustus to say, that it was better to be Herod's hog than his son; Herod professing Judaism. (Horne's Introd. to Scriptures, vol. i. p. 629.) This fancy is incorporated into some of the early English Mysteries, as well as some of the more recent Continental ones. A sort of buffoon also was occasionally introduced to please the populace; as in one mentioned by Hawkins ("Origin of English Drama," vol. i. p. 7, &c.) a cowardly character called Watkyn is introduced, who begs Herod, "for Mahound's sake," to make him a knight, that he may be properly qualified to assist in the slaughter. He is however beaten off by the women. Herod and his knights frequently swear by "Mahound," and occasionally by "Seynt Mahound," something like the Sicilian peasantry swearing by "Santu Diavolu."

P. 149. This and the three following are taken from popular broad-side carols: the two first contain rather curious legends, of which one may have already been observed in the old carol for St. Stephen. The next carol is similar to the old one called "Joyis Fyve."

P. 161. From Recueil de Poetes Gascons.

P. 163. From Noei Borguignon.

P. 164. From Recueil de Noels Provençaux, Avignon, 1791.

P. 167. From Noels Vieux et Nouveaux.

P. 170. From the same.

P. 172. From Recueil de Noels Provençaux, Avignon, 1807.

The Tunes are of a pleasing and plaintive nature, and most of them appear to be of considerable antiquity. In No. 3 will be found a specimen of the old minor key, with a flat seventh at the close; the scale is founded on one of the old Grecian modes, having the flat seventh ascending and descending, and was varied by the introduction of the more modern minor key, as far back, probably, as the 15th century. It appears harsh to modern ears, which expect the *g* sharp. No. 6 is of simple construction, almost a chant. No. 11, according to tradition, has been known for three hundred years back. No. 9 is very similar to one of the old Shakspearian tunes, "There lived a man in Babylon." Nos. 14 and 15 are inserted to show the manner in which the carol-singers sing in parts. Nos. 16 and 17 are examples of French carol tunes, both in a minor key, and apparently old. No. 18 is a tune, which I have been informed by the lady who furnished me with it, has been handed down as the appropriate one for the old ballad of "Lord Thomas and fair Elinor." I have therefore introduced it, though not a regular carol tune, from its probable antiquity. Although the tunes are appropriated in this selection to particular carols, they are not confined to them, but some favourite ones are sung to various sets of words. As it would have encumbered the work to have printed a greater number, I may, from the difference of taste in these matters, have omitted some, more prized by the singers, but I have endeavoured to bring forward the best.

EXPLANATION

Of some of the French Provincialisms.

Ajayre,	accoucher.
Amaço,	ensemble.
Amounedat,	pecunieux.
At ai cu,	est poussé à bout.
Badave,	admiroit.
Beleou,	peut-être.
Bioou,	bœuf.
Bourriquet,	âne.
Cami,	chemin.
Coussi,	comment.
D'aicor,	d'accord.
Dambé,	avec.
Liéyt,	lit.
Mentretan,	cependant.
Miéchourou,	demi-heure?
Paouramen,	pauvrement.
Piucélo,	pucelle.
Prens,	enceinte.
Pu,	plus.
Trinc,	train.

FINIS.

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A VIRGIN MOST PURE.

A Vir-gin most pure as the pro-phets do tell Hath brought

forth a Babe as it hath her be-fell To be our Re-

deemer from death hell and sin Which Ad-am's trans-gression

Chorus

hath wrapt us all in Re-joice and be you merry

Re-joice and be you merry Set sor-row a-side

Christ Je-sus our Sa-viour was born on this

tide

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A CHILD THIS DAY IS BORN.

A child this day is born A child of high re nown Most

worthy of a Scep - tre A Sceptre and a Crown

Chorus

Norels Norels No - rels No - rels sing all we may Be

cause the King of all Kings was born this blessed day

THE LORD AT FIRST HAD ADAM MADE.

The Lord at first had Adam made Out of the dust and

day And in his nostrils breathed life E'en as the Scriptures

say And then in Eden's Paradise He placed him to

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dwell That he within it should remain To dress -

Chorus

- and keep it well Now let good Christians all begin

An holy life to live And to re - joice and merry

be For this is Christmas Eve

WHEN RIGHTEOUS JOSEPH.

When righteous Joseph Wedded was to

Is - rael's He - brew maid A glorious Angel

from Heaven came Who to the Vir - gin said Hail

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bless ed Mary full of grace The Lord re

mains with thee Thou shalt conceive & bear a Son our

Sariour for to be

THE FIRST NOWELL.

The first Nowell that the Angel did say Was to certain poor

Shepherds in field as they lay In fields where they lay keeping their

sheep In a cold winter's night that was so deep Nowell Nowell

Nowell Nowell Born is the King of Is - ra - el

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THIS NEW CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Thus new Christmas Carol Let us cheerfully sing To the honour o

glory of our heavenly King Who was born of a Virgin

Blessed Mary by name For poor sinners re-demption To the world here he came

GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN.

God rest you merry Gentle-men Let nothing you dismay

For Jesus Christ our Sari-our Was born on Christmas

day To save us all from Satan's power When we were

Chorus

gone a-stray Oh! ti-dings

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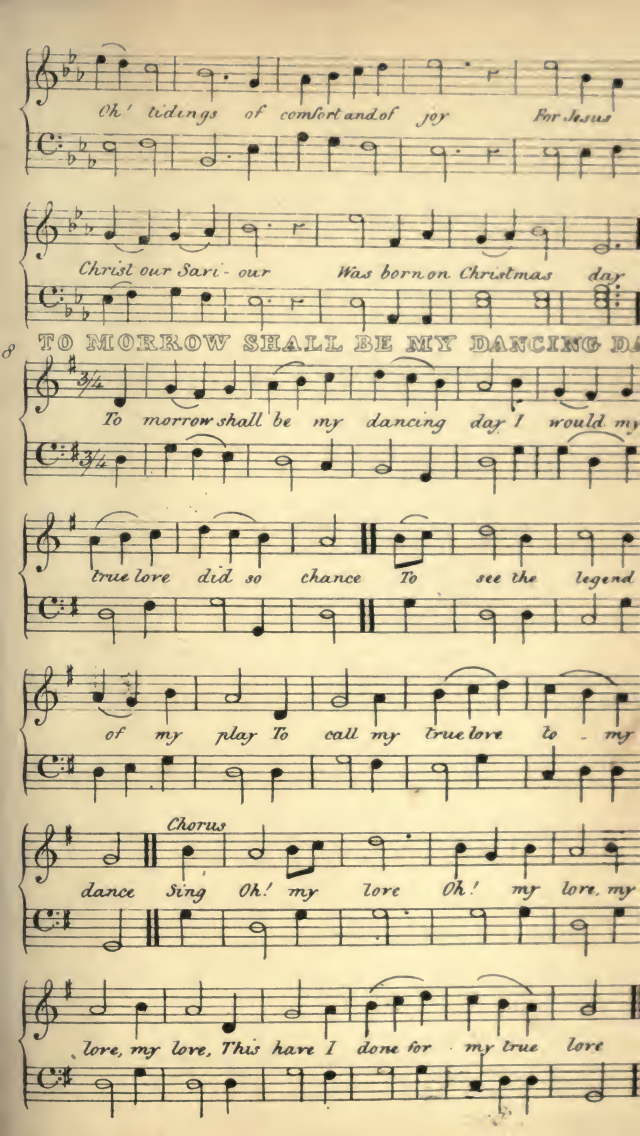

Oh! tidings of comfort and of joy For Jesus

Christ our Savi- our Was born on Christmas day

8 TO MORROW SHALL BE MY DANCING DA

To morrow shall be my dancing day I would my

true love did so chance To see the legend

of my play To call my true love to - my

Chorus

dance Sing Oh! my love Oh! my love, my

love, my love, This have I done for my true love

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9

I SAW THREE SHIPS.

I saw three ships come sailing in On Christmas day, on

Christmas day I saw three ships come sailing in On Christmas day in the morn

10

JOSEPH WAS AN OLD MAN.

Joseph was an old man And an old man was he

When he wedded Mary in the land of Gali - lee

11

WHEN JESUS CHRIST WAS TWELVE,

When Jesus Christ was twelve years old As holy Scripture plainly t

He then disputed brave and bold A mongst the learne

Chorus

doctors Then praise the Lord both high and low That he his wond

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works may shew That we at last to Heav'n may go Whe

Christ in glory reigneth.

IN THOSE TWELVE DAYS.

In those twelve days let us be glad In those twelve days let us be

glad For God by his Pow'r hath all things made What is

that which is but one What is that which is but one We

have but one God alone In heaven above sits on his

throne

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SAINT STEPHEN

Saint Stephen was an ho _ ly man Endu-

ed with heavenly might And many wonders

he did work Be fore the people's sight And

by the blessed Spirit of God Which did his heart in

flame He spared not in every _ place To

preach Christ Jesus' name Oh! man do never

faint nor fear When God the truth shall try But mark he

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Steph en for Christ's sake Was willing for to die

4.

HARK, HARK, WHAT NEWS.

Hark hark what news the Angels bring Glad tidings of a

new born King Who is the San-

In

our of mankind In whom we may Sal-

In whom we may Sal va tion

whom we may Sal ra tion find

ration Sal ration find

find Sal ration find

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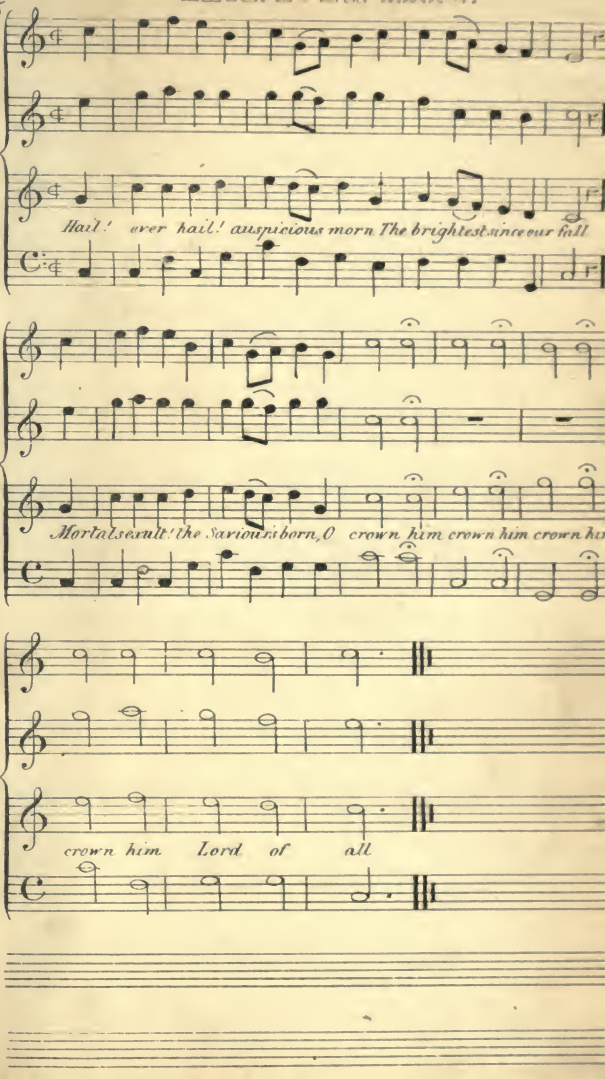
HAIL! EVER HAIL!


Hail! ever hail! auspicious morn The brightest since our fall
Mortals exult! the Saviour's born, O crown him crown him crown him
crown him Lord of all

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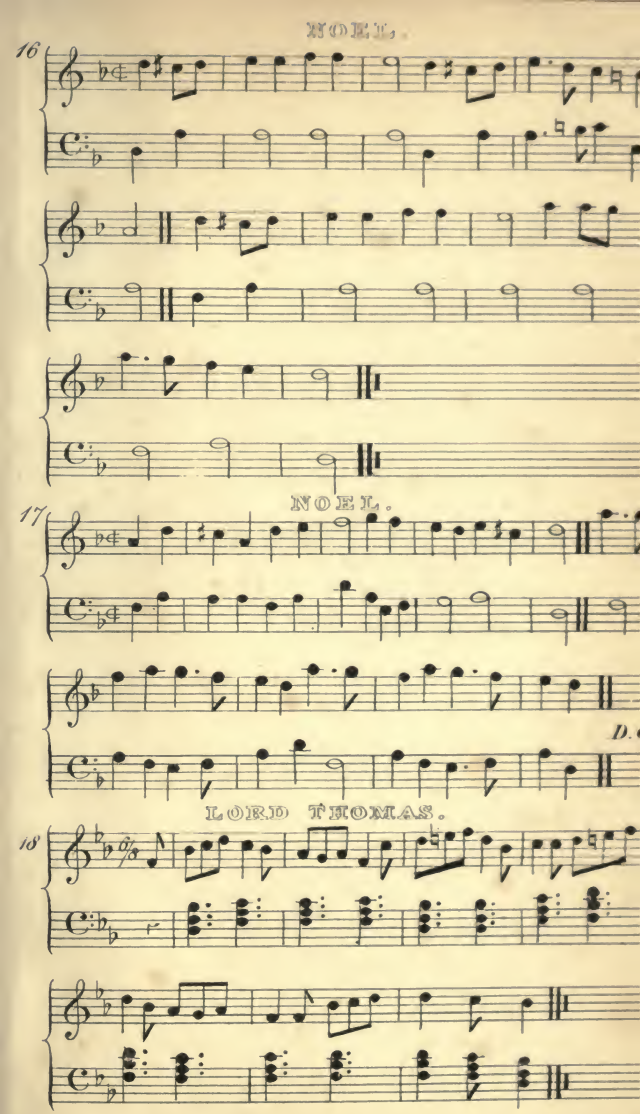
NOEL.

16



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